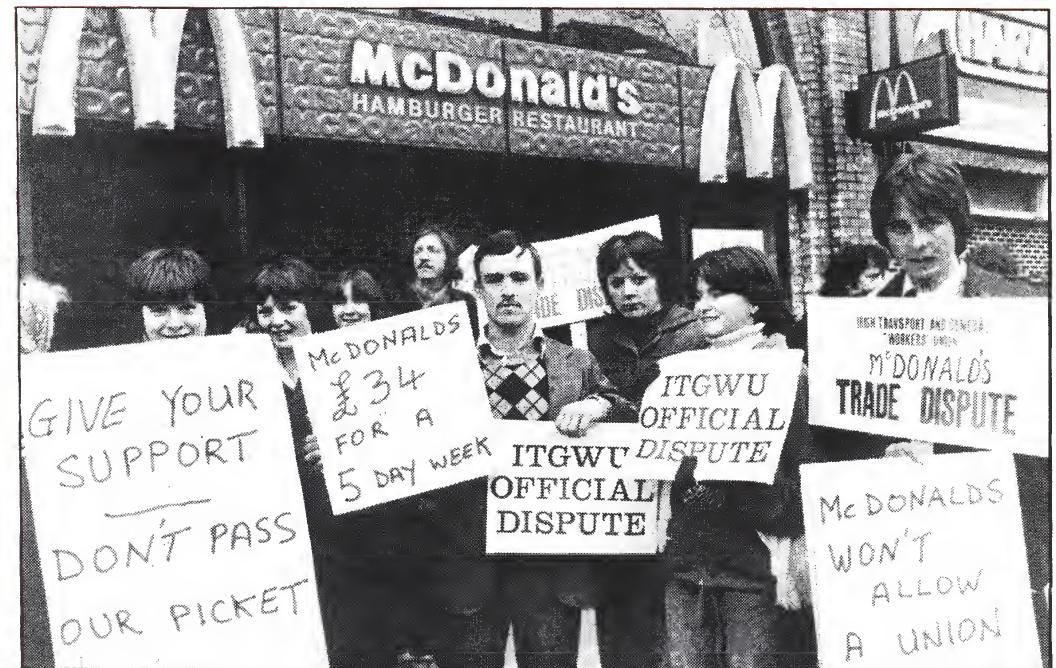


No. 1

15p

MAY— JUNE 1979

Anarchist Worker



**Don't be a scab for
a bag of chips**

STOP PRESS(MAY 2nd) As we go to press at least nine people who have been helping out on the picket line at McDonalds have received visits from the special branch. This can not be seen as anything other than an attempt by the authorities to scare off active support for the strikers. Members of the AWA held a collection on the Dublin May Day march for the McDonalds strikers — which raised just over £200. Again the state stepped in and two members had their names taken by the gardai. It appears that they will be charged with making an "illegal" collection.

What is the AWA?

Anarchism is the most misunderstood political theory in the whole of the English language. Despite what the newspapers, politicians and bosses may say it does not mean chaos, disorder or mayhem.

It means something quite different, it means a society without bosses, without a ruling class. A society where the working class run economic and social life through their own democratic workers councils, in their own interests.

We believe that the working class, the people who create the wealth of the world, are quite capable, when armed with political insight, of overthrowing capitalism and creating a free socialist society. A society run by a co-ordinated network of workers councils using modern communications to ensure total exposure and control of decision making.

Change the Laws

We have no interest in changing the Government. Parliament is an instrument of the ruling class. We do not wish to delegate our power to the politicians. However all changes which improve the standard of living must be welcomed. But the AWA rejects the idea that gradual reform can create socialism.

Mistrustful of the working class' ability to create socialism, reformists firmly oppose independent grass roots activity. This plays into the bosses hands. The most obvious case of this was the suppression of strikes and occupations of the Allende Government in Chile. Then with the workers weakened and unarmed, the military remove its "liberal and democratic" mask and seized power. The parliamentary road to socialism of Allende has been swamped with workers blood. Why should we trust a small group of politicians to run our lives, why should we want to.

No to the Party Dictatorship!

The AWA condemns all attempts by revolutionary groups to seize power in the name of the working class. These groups (Leninists) regard the working class as only capable of a low level of

political understanding, usually termed 'trade union consciousness.' Therefore they see themselves at the head of the class (the vanguard). They will lead the class into socialism! This servile relationship between party and class is mirrored in the internal dictatorship within the party bureaucracy.

Whenever any of these vanguards has managed to seize power it has resulted in the crushing of all real workers democracy as the new ruling class tighten their hold on the reins of power.

So what is to be done?

The working class, unwilling to shoulder the burden of bankrupt capitalism and rejecting the party "solution," must create its own grassroots organisations. This, not forming new unions or breakaway unions, it is the building of rank and file groups within the unions which can by-pass the bureaucracy in pursuit of class interests. Rank and file groups with cross communication and decision making, co-operation and acts of solidarity will be natural developments as the struggle progresses.

In this way a united working class can be achieved, as confidence is built through action. The open and democratic manner of such a movement will have a dramatic effect on everyday life. People will for the first time make real decisions affecting themselves and their lives. However this development will only be fully realised with the total overthrow of capitalism and the creation of anarchism.



"Socialism equals soviets plus electrification" (Lenin)

What We Do

The AWA aims to explain anarchism within the working class, we believe that it is essential that revolutionary anarchist ideas be widely known and discussed if any meaningful change is to take place in society.

To this end we publish this paper and work within working class organisations advocating direct workers power. We work within the unions, (though not as full time officials), rank and file groups, womens groups etc.

The Organisation

The AWA was formed in December 1978 by revolutionary anarchists who saw the need to organise in order to be effective. We are a membership organisation. Our members accept the principle of collective decision making. There is an agreed set of aims and principals, and a formal constitution which is open to revision at the National Conference which is held roughly every three months.

want
to find out
more about us

For more information about the Anarchist
Workers Alliance contact a local member
or write to us at Box AWA,
7, Winetavern Street,
Belfast 1.

JACK SAID HE WOULD GET THE COUNTRY BACK ON ITS FEET - HERE WE ARE!



When the Government met the farmers at the end of February and agreed to drop the 2% levy on farm produce, they could have had little idea of how industrial workers would react. Workers were already pissed off with paying the lions share over taxation while the professionals farmers and companies paid what can only be called a pittance. Not to mention the dropping of the Wealth Tax and the Capital Gains Tax. A classic example of the rich paying damn all is that of Roadstone, one of the biggest profit makers in the country. In 1977 they paid only £15,000 out of pre-tax profits of £11,600,000. This brought their accumulated tax debt to over £22,000,000 yet they received an I.D.A. hand-out of £4 million.

The ordinary worker was totally pissed off with this situation and the ball was started rolling by the Howth workers who went out on a half-day strike on March 1st. The rank and file in all the unions were calling for action. Marches took place all over the country, bringing out huge numbers of trade unionists. The Dublin Trades Council called a one day general strike for March 20th and more than 150,000 workers responded to the call by walking out of their workplaces and joining the demonstration. This was the biggest working class

demonstration in Dublin for over 60 years. All over the country there were strikes and marches, including one of 40,000 in Cork.

Throughout all this the bureaucrats of the ICTU, ITGWU, WUI and the executive of the Dublin Trades Council tried to dampen feelings and divert the protest into the useless cul-de-sac of a "national petition". These leaders, or to be more accurate bosses stooges, got their answer on March 20th when they had to support the strike if they were to save face. Only the ICTU maintained its total opposition, preferring to go off and try to draw up a new National Wage Agreement with the Government. Or "national understanding" as they want to call it — the name doesn't matter it's still wage restraint.

However the important question was never answered. What is our tax money to be spent on? If it's left to the government it will probably go on such "necessary" items as prison building, IDA handouts, increasing the strength of the Gardai and other such crap. Should we not make it very clear that we want our money to be spent on really necessary projects like housebuilding, health, welfare services and education. Tax hell out of the rich but don't just let them use the money to strengthen their own system.

The campaign of selective days of strike action by the Post Office Workers Union in pursuit of the 37% plus pay claim quickly turned into an all-out national strike. Militant POWU members, especially in the Dublin outdoor branch and in Tralee, pushed for a strike that would be effective and got it. This was a kick in the teeth for the union bureaucrats who didn't really want to do anything other than engage in a brief period of shadow boxing with the Government. This strike is important because it is for a real increase in wages, not for the all too usual 2% - 5%. It also gives a lead to other public service workers who have been held back for years by wage restraint and tame union officials. You can help the post office workers by seeing that the company you work for does not use the services of the blackleg 'courier' firms which have sprung up to make a very profitable killing and to weaken the strike.



black the 'couriers'

which the State uses to integrate the workers into the electoral game, thus distracting them from their basic problems and their causes. The total emancipation of society necessitates the destruction of capital and its repressive State administration. The CNT declares itself anti-parliamentarian advocating the boycott of all participation in the bourgeoisie democracy necessitating the abstention from every type of referendum and parliamentary elections. Instead the CNT calls for the social revolution by way of direct action of the workers.

(c) Workers Participation: is against party politics because only through the working class acting in a conscious and autoestionated manner is it possible to make the revolution.

The CNT sees no difference between the means used to attain the end and the end it hopes to attain, the internal structure of the CNT is coherent with the final type of society it foresees - an anarchist or libertarian communist society.

The basic organ of the CNT is the industrial branch or local syndicate of the CNT.

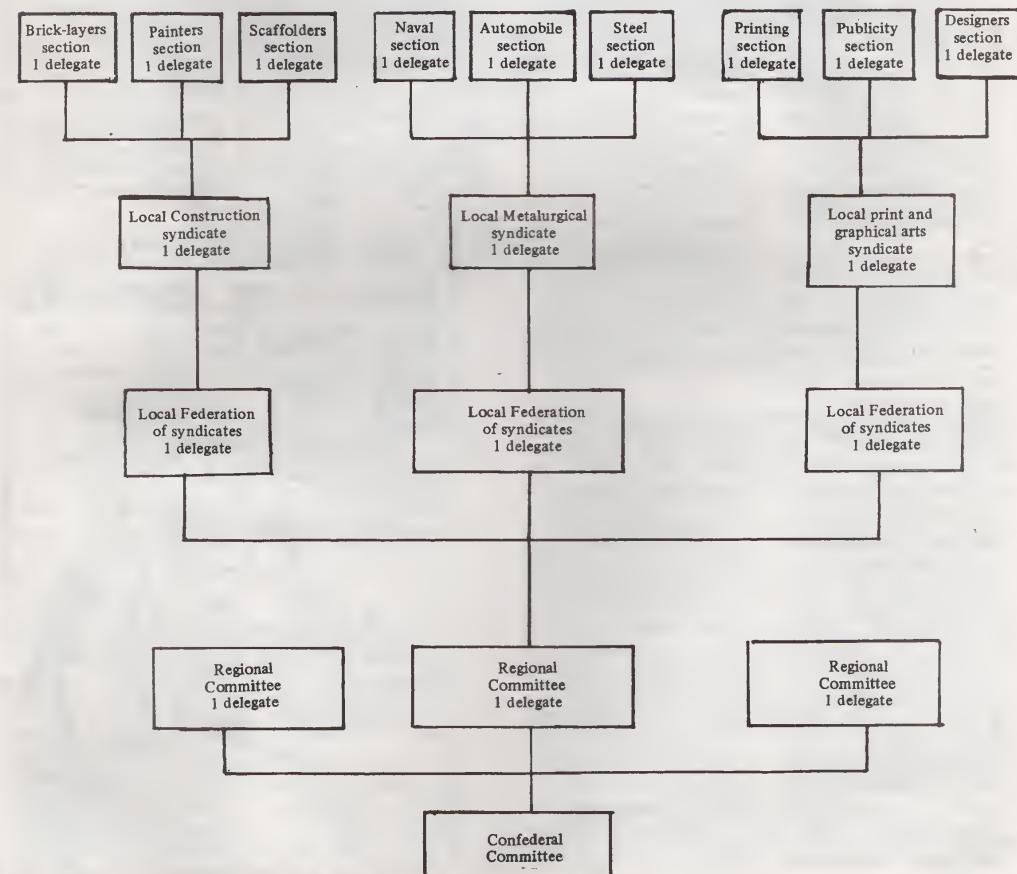
Local syndicate assembly:

This is the basic pillar of the CNT. It is the union of all members of the various sections that go to make up the branch. It decides general strategy of the branch and its as its needs dictate. The shop assembly elects two delegates to the factory committee, also its own com-

mittee to look after collection of dues, paper and leaflet distribution etc.

This article has been written not as any glorification of the CNT or the Spanish Anarchist Movement which needless to mention has its problems, has made its mistakes, but rather to show by pointing out the essential structures of the CNT a genuine effort to unite working people on anarchist principles.

A voluntary coming together of workers for their own benefit, which tries to maintain that power stays at the base and not at the top which is the case in our present trade union system in Ireland today. The CNT by its structure tries to abolish the bureaucracy that comes with centralisation by making sure that decisions affecting workers are taken by and only by those workers effected.



BILL OR BILLINGS IT WON'T WORK

The new Health Family Planning Bill is a highly restrictive and punitive piece of legislation. It is being presented as a liberal compromise with the Catholic Church while in fact it gives legal status to much of the reactionary thinking of the Church. The tortuous distinctions in the bill between contraception and "bona fide family planning" reflects the absurdity of trying to legislate an Irish solution to an Irish problem.

There is no acceptance of the autonomy of women and their right to control their own bodies in this legislation. The provisions in relation to access to contraceptives have been by-passed in practice by thousands of people which should mean that it will be unworkable. The family planning clinics are now dealing with 50,000 people a year. 100,000 have used the postal services of the F.P.S. which is outlawed under the new Bill. The Bill reverses the constitutional right won in the McGee case by involving the discretionary power of doctors and chemists in contraceptive decisions and by making it illegal to import contraceptives.

The main provisions of the Bill are:

(1) Contraceptives of any kind will only be available on a doctors prescription at a chemist. Doctors are legally entitled to prescribe contraceptives for "bona fide" family planning purposes only. However the bona fide clause is not defined, leaving a whole area of discretion to the judgement of the doctor. Doctors are entitled to opt out of the operating of the new Bill altogether and it is likely that many will particularly as the Bill contains heavy penalties for doctors who infringe the "bona fide" clause. Prescriptions are required for nonmedical contraceptives such as condoms too which is good indication of the reactionary thinking behind the Bill. The fact that contraceptives will only be available on prescription and at chemists means that the price will go up enormously taking into account doctors fees, chemists fees etc. this limiting access to family planning. As if that's not enough contraceptives such as the pill if it's not prescribed as a cycle regulator will not be available on the medical card. This is a blatant and totally unacceptable form of discrimination towards working class women.

Access to contraceptives will be severely limited by doctors and chemists choosing to opt out of the scheme and by raising prices and at the same time closing of other sources such as family planning clinics through licencing restrictions.

(2) Family Planning Clinics can only operate if they get the Ministers consent and are in accordance with specified regulations. The Ministers consent can be withheld if he considers it not to be in the public interest or that the service is not reasonably required. The level of state control and Ministerial discretion in these clauses is frightening. Clinics who do not succeed in getting licences are forbidden to sell, supply or stock any type of contraceptives. must provide a service in natural methods and must be run under the general direction and supervision of a medical practitioner.

The implications of these clauses are that many of the existing family planning clinics who provide specialist services such as the fitting of IUDs and caps will have to close. Over 20,000 a year have used the services of family planning clinics since they opened. Many clinics have been completely subsidised by medical card holders up to now. By contrast natural family planning clinics can operate without licences and without any restriction whatsoever. No minimum training is required of those teaching natural methods. This blatantly obvious subservience to the Catholic Church by the State takes us back about 20 years and must be totally rejected. In addition to these exceptions from the restrictions in the Bill grants for research into family planning will be made to natural family planning methods only!

(3) The restrictions on information on family planning are particularly reactionary. All literature or sex education has to be approved by the Dept. of Health. Information on or advocating artificial methods of contraception are forbidden. Penalties for offences in these areas are put into the criminal law code again. So you have the ridiculous situation where anyone can give information on natural methods of family planning without restriction but anything relating to artificial methods is a criminal offence.

(4) Sale & Import of contraceptives. Importation of contraceptives by post is prohibited. This violates the constitutional right won by the McGee case. People travelling abroad are only allowed to carry contraceptives in personal quantities. So customs officers now have the right to decide what quantity of contraceptives would be sufficient for a travellers own use.

(5) Penalties: For infringing any of the provisions of the Bill in relation to the sale or availability of contraceptives.

(a) First offence max £500 and or six months
Subsequent offences max. £500 + £250 per day for continuing and/or 12 months.

The Bill makes Family Planning the property of private business and the professions instead of a State financed service that people are entitled to by right. For instance if research is to be done on the pill it will be the drug companies that finance it which must raise questions about its validity. It removes access to contraception by raising the price of contraceptives and by not making contraceptives available on the medical card. It is a bid designed not to upset the Church or the professionals. It is not capable of amendment because its basic framework is too restrictive. It has to be totally rejected as an arrogant piece of state and church interference in our lives.

AND REMEMBER PEOPLE.....
BECAUSE OF OUR RYTHM METHOD
OUR CHURCH IS ONE
BIG "HAPPY"
FAMILY!!!



C.I.E.- work to rule



Late in 1978 shop stewards of the unions representing the C.I.E. craft workers got together to work out proposals on salary scales, productivity deals and a wage increase to compensate for inflation. This meet-

The formation of this committee was unique in the recent history of C.I.E. where interunion discussion was rare. It also instilled a new interest in union affairs amongst the rank and file. Contact between the stewards and the shop floor workers was intense and on a daily basis. To all intents and purposes the unofficial committee truly represented the rank and file.

Just before Christmas the committee approached the ICTU for assistance and were given the "benefit" of Des Branigan, a congress hack. The committee was wary of Branigan but as one committee member later put it "with limited resources you have to accept whatever you're offered." Branigan said he would

study the position of craft workers in CIE and make his proposals early in the New Year to CIE management. A week before Branigan produced his report a well attended meeting of craft workers in Liberty Hall was warned by stewards that there would probably be a long fight between workers and management before any substantial gains were made. A proposal was also made at this meeting that an alliance with craftsmen in the other semi-state bodies be formed. This proposal was never acted upon.

Branigan made his proposals to the CIE company in mid-January. These were:

(i) A pay increase of approx. £4.35 (the downtown rate) which was to be

ing led to the formation of an unofficial shop stewards committee with representatives from all the unions involved. The task of this committee was to co-ordinate and unify all claims.

backdated to April 1st 1978.
(ii) Parity with similar craft workers in Aer Lingus and,

(iii) Negotiation of a new productivity deal.

The company refused to negotiate on all three points and would not recognise the unofficial shop stewards committee.

At a crowded and noisy second meeting in Liberty Hall the mood was of anger. Delegates from all over were urging to call a strike immediately. The committee in an effort to maintain control proposed a work to rule and ban on overtime. This was accepted by an overwhelming majority of tradesmen present.

There then followed a two week work to rule which seriously disrupted bus and suburban rail services. At the end of this period the Labour Court, at the company's request, arbitrated. At the end of the 21 day arbitration period the Labour Court made known its recommendations. It found in favour of (i) the increase of £4.35 but rejected parity with Aer Lingus on the grounds that their salary was the result of an agreed productivity deal. The Labour Court also found against the need for a new productivity deal but said the present deal should be open to discussion and amendment.

The shop stewards committee decided to recom-

mend acceptance of the Labour Court proposals. But the issue was far from solved. The craftsmen remembered the earlier talk of £20 increase or a long strike. Craftworkers in A.G.E.M.O.U. disregarded their stewards recommendation to accept the Labour Court's decision. Without consulting the other unions involved AGEMOU decided to renew industrial action and returned to work to rule and ban on overtime. The other unions involved voted to accept the Labour Courts recommendations by a margin of 5/1.

At a packed and very heated meeting on Sunday 25th March AGEMOU was taken to task over their action. The

main issue contended was not that AGEMOU had rejected the Labour Courts recommendations but that they had taken action without consulting the united shop stewards committee. Before the issue could be resolved AGEMOU members present walked out. AGEMOU had in effect cut themselves off from their fellow craft workers and severely damaged the credibility of the joint shop stewards committee.

At present AGEMOU members are continuing their industrial action, but whether or not they maintain this action a severe blow has been struck against any co-ordinated inter-union activity in CIE. The issue is not whether or

not AGEMOU was right to reject the Labour Courts recommendations but the fact that they by-passed a committee which they claimed to have subscribed to.

The company has recently suggested to representatives of the other unions that it would consider paying the back dated increases if members of these unions, mainly the NEETU and AUEW, employed in the Broadstone and Donnybrook shop supporting the AGEMOU work to rule and ban on overtime. There is also talk amongst craft workers in CIE railway works of a closed shop against AGEMOU members, although this idea is not likely to be accepted by the majority of

craft workers. AGEMOU have also claimed that if they were offered an extra £1 on the £4.35 they would discontinue their work to rule.

It is debatable whether the unofficial shop stewards committee would have survived, even without the inter union conflict. The period between the first work to rule and the acceptance of the Labour Courts recommendations saw a marked lack of shop steward consultation with shop floor workers. There are many lessons to be learned from this attempt at trade union co-operation at rank and file level but for the present most CIE workers feel decidedly bitter and in no mood to learn.

The following was taken from a leaflet circulating in Northern Ireland which was produced by the Belfast Women's Groups, on the Payment for Debt Act. This Act, passed in October 1971, was an emergency measure to deal with rent and rates strikers. It has since become part of the "Welfare State" and was extended in April 1976 to include any rent arrears. Since October 1st it has been used against those behind with fuel bills. So far the use of this Act has led to one suicide, Rosie Nolan of Turf Lodge.

The operation of the P.D.A. causes enormous hardship to many families throughout Northern Ireland.

FOR EXAMPLE :

(The following estimates are based on actual cases of families deducted under the P.D.A.)

(1) A woman on her own with 5 children, her benefit after deduction is £17. Child benefit = £20. Weekly fuel costs = £16.50 i.e. Gas = £7.00 Electric = £7.00 (under a voluntary agreement!) Coal = £2.50

Thus she has £20.50 left to live on. She starves herself to feed the children.

(2) A man employed as a driver who has a wife and one child. After deduction his income is £29 a week. An electricity meter is set for £9.00 a week to collect arrears. Gas is £4 a week. H.P. payments of £7 a week. This leaves £9.00 for food, clothing, etc. for two adults and a child! Gross wages of £42 have been reduced to £9.00

THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT DEDUCTABLE is as follows :

- (a) The claimant's rent per wk.
- (b) PLUS rent arrears of up to £6.00 a week (if in receipt of a state benefit, which is not earnings related, in which case it is £7 per week)
- (c) PLUS a collection charge of 50 p per week.

If you are working there is no maximum amount - they can take ALL your wages.

The fact that people are behind with their rent, gas and electricity is NOT because they are 'irresponsible' and spend their money foolishly on 'luxuries' but because they don't have a decent adequate income as of right in the first place, which will allow them to meet the costs of keeping themselves and their family properly nourished, clothed and warm.

THE EXTENSION OF THE P.D.A. TO FUEL BILLS IS ESPECIALLY SERIOUS GIVEN THE CURRENT SITUATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

1. Electricity and gas are THREE TIMES as dear as in England.
2. A higher % of the population depend on social welfare benefits.
3. Unemployment levels are twice the British average.
4. Average earnings are below the British average.
5. A higher % of the population are on or below the poverty line

It is has been argued that the P.D.A. is needed because of a high level of public debt here. In fact, figures from British cities show that N. Ireland is not an exceptional case.

DID YOU KNOW THE FOLLOWING :

- (a) Under the P.D.A. there is NO RIGHT OF APPEAL against the amount decided on by the B.A.B. to deduct.
- (b) You have no right to a rent and rates rebate.
- (c) You are not informed at regular intervals of the amount that you still owe.
- (d) You cannot apply for an 'exceptional needs grant' if subject to the P.D.A.
- (e) You cannot transfer your house.
- (f) As arrears are deducted at source from wages and state benefits - this denies you control over your own income.

(g) The Act discriminates against people who depend on the state for their income, e.g. public employees and claimants, since their income is accessible to allocation.

- (h) If your employer refuses to deduct from your income, he/she becomes liable for the debt!

"Over the next few weeks and months, we will be disconnecting supplies everywhere. There are no "no go" areas. It is the summer and it will cause the minimum of hardship. It is time we got the knife in. We have bent over backwards to help these people. Now it is time we took some action."

Mr. John Gaston, Chief Executive NIES
13/6/78 Belfast Telegraph

REVIEWS

The Dispossessed

by Ursula LeGuin

The sister worlds of Urras and Anarres are totally opposed in their ways of life. There has been almost no communication between them since, generations ago, a terrible revolution swept Urras and the revolutionaries left to make a new settlement on the moon — planet Anarres. Now Anarres is totally unruled, an anarchist society where mutual aid, equality and the common good dictate action.

Despite it being a dry and barren world, affected by food and material shortages, the Anarresti were positive that "they would not regress to pre-urban, pre-technological tribalism. They knew that their anarchism was the product of very high civilisation, of a complex diversified culture, of a stable economy and a highly industrialised technology that could maintain high production and rapid transportation of goods".

The Anarresti call themselves Odonians after the woman Odo, who formulated their ideas of a non-authoritarian communism or to give it another name — anarchism. On their world there is no authority or property relationships between people. Money does not exist. All share equally in the running of society and all receive of its fruits according to their needs. But one man, the scientist Shevek, wants to leave the planet for Urras where he feels he will be better able to continue his work. When Shevek arrives there on one of the few space freighters which travel between the two worlds, he soon sees life as it really is. He can't comprehend the economics which allow poverty and disease for some while others live in the lap of

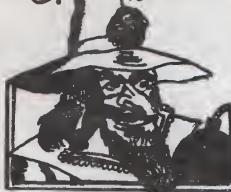
luxury. Or the fact that Urras is male-dominated and riddled with sexist ideas. Or their strange customs and relationships to each other. "He had reflected quite early in his stay on Urras, that the Urrasti lived among mountains of excrement, but never mentioned shit."

While the difference between the two worlds is graphically illustrated the book does not view anarchism as being without faults and flaws. It sees the difficulties of a libertarian society in a world of scarcity. It sees the dangers of the growth of bureaucracy and the power that a rigid interpretation of the "common good" can present. Yet at the same time it shows clearly the great achievements and rewards of an anarchist system. The book is especially moving in its descriptions of the solidarity and humanity of the Anarresti.

And so far I have said nothing of the plot, and I'm not going to except to mention that it is good stuff, and in no way can it be considered as mere padding for a political work. This is a book for all those who initially don't want to read a non-fiction introduction to anarchism.

(Panther SF 75p)

GUY FAWKES



the only person to enter parliament
with honest intentions

Framed
through the
special
criminal
Court

FRAME UP!



THROUGH SPECIAL COURTS

This excellent pamphlet subtitled "The Great Train Robbery Trial" is an account of the attempt by the State to destroy a political organisation, the Irish Republican Socialist Party.

It details chapter by chapter the machinery used against them especially designed for repression. The *Special Criminal Court* with its empty jury boxes. The *Heavy Gang* (first used against comrades Noel and Marie Murray) with their torture and

perjury. The pamphlet contains arguments against the legal irregularities of the case, it documents the medical evidence of torture and goes into the repression which has dogged the I.R.S.P. from its beginnings.

Also there are photographs of the campaign around the trial against the Special Criminal Court. The pamphlet is helping to extend that campaign even further. Copies available from Starry Plough Publications, 34 Up, Gardiner St., Dublin 1 @ 40p.

The Womens Room

Marilyn French

The paperback version of this International best seller has just been released in Britain.

It is the story of over twenty years of the life of Mira Ward her anger and frustrations at the role that society has forced her into particularly through marriage, her internalisation of the tedious work within the home, her changing feelings towards her sons as they grow up. Her relationships with other people, mostly women and their experiences make this book a powerful and passionate book to read.

"In Harlem the government pushes heroin to keep the niggers down and doctors by the thousands give barbiturates and tranquilizers to all the housewives; keep the natives quiet. When the drugs don't work anymore, they put the blacks in jail and us in here (Mental Hospital)"

Sphere £1.37½p (Eire) £1.25 (N.I.)

Anarchist Worker

Third Year on the Blanket

Two years ago in Sept. '76 when Ciaran Nugent began his Blanket Protest few others, other than the relatives of the men who were transferred into them — had heard about the H-Blocks. Now 1,000's march regularly about them in what is the most emotive and strongest issue in the North.

The H-Blocks — called after their H-shaped lay out — are the modern style wings of the Maze Prison, Long Kesh. The "inspiration" behind them was part of the British regimes plan to remove political status from prisoners and from June '76 anyone found guilty of political offences are being given the conditions of ordinary prisoners — prison uniform — work — cell etc. It is hoped by the N.I. Office this will give the

impression things are returning to normal and N.I. has no special problems.

Reacting against this loss of special status and its privileges more and more republican prisoners now filling the H-Blocks have joined Ciaran in protest, their numbers including 28 women in Armagh Gaol are around 400.

The protest follows the form of totally rejecting the prison system. They have long since smashed up their cell furniture, they refuse the uniform and wear only an army blanket. They grow their hair long and don't shave, they refuse prison work and are locked up constantly. And the "Blanket Men and Women" have brought the protest one step further by refusing to wash or go to the toilet.

Their cell reeks of their own excreta and their bodies are plagued with scabies and pests.

Their struggle is a bitter one, the screws on a T.V. documentary considered a dog deserved better treatment than Republican prisoners. There are frequent beatings, violent cell searches, along with normal prison rules banning letters, books etc.

The R.A.C. is a broadly based organisation that attracts a mass following. Their marches began to coincide with the anniversaries of the Civil Rights marches of 10 years ago when the troubles began. As the first of these from Coalisland to Dungannon last October brought out over 15,000. The impetus is still holding.

The prisoners hold their morale by shouting to each other and abuse at the screws. Irish lessons and rebel songs echo through the Blocks corridors. Their own sheer endurance and the R.A.C.s campaign outside has kept the protest one step ahead of the authorities propaganda attempt to crush the Blanket Protest.

On March 8th outside Armagh's women's prison, a picket was held to celebrate International women's day and demand political status for the prisoners inside. It was attacked by the R.U.C. and 11 were held, but the organisers, Women against Imperialism, declared that they were not intimidated and promised another bigger demonstration.

True to their word on Saturday April 7th over 100 women and supporters, including 30 from Dublin showed up again. The women inside joined in the songs and slogans shout and sung from the crowd and they hung a political status banner out through the bars and waved to the people below.

The R.U.C., although they didn't make arrests, violently pushed the crowd off the road on to the path; despite torn clothes and the odd bruise they delivered, the R.U.C. kept their "crowd control" to a limit.

People and prisoners alike found the picket and the atmosphere a morale booster. The demonstration made the point that women are equal to men in the struggle in the North and that solidarity will continue till ALL their demands are met.

Women support Armagh prisoners



No. 2

15p

LATE OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 1979

Anarchist Worker

Mansion House Squatted

On August 28, three families from the East Wall area of Dublin moved in and squatted the Mansion House. The squat lasted for almost a week. The families on one side of the Mansion House and the Ideal Homes exhibition on the other. The families were homeless after being evicted by their landlord at 104 Church Road. The Corporation refused to house them because they did not have enough points. With 12,000 people on the housing list in Dublin, the points system is just a form of rationing and quite a vicious one at that. When young couples have to resort to having babies to increase their number of points, which is common practice, then it is more than time to declare a housing crisis and start a massive building programme with direct labour.

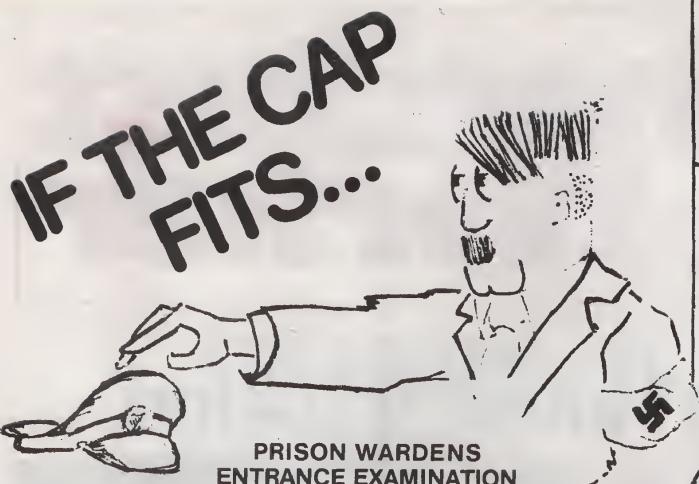
The Corporation insisted that it could not house these three families because it would not be fair to all the other families on the waiting list. Yet within a week of squatting the Mansion House they were all housed. This was a great victory for direct action and against the faceless bureaucracy which hides behind the points system.

Decent housing is a basic human right which is being denied to thousands of people at the moment. Another generation of children is growing up in overcrowded conditions, living with all the tensions that kind of situation produces. It is quite amazing how fast the Corporation could find the resources to give Sean McDermot Street a facelift for the papal visit, but can never find the resources to provide decent housing and maintenance.

There is an unorganised squatters 'movement' in Corporation housing at the moment because of the demand for housing. However it is still possible for the Corp. to play off the legal tenants against the squatters. In this they receive the help of many of the tenants associations, who often seem more eager than the state to uphold 'law and order' in their estates and flat complexes. Apart from the few incidents of old folk and sick people in hospital having their homes squatted, we support people taking direct action to secure housing for themselves and their families.

It would be better to squat the houses of the rich in Foxrock and Howth but with the Forcible Entry Act it just would not be on, unless there was a strong organised squatters movement. The lesson of the Mansion House squat is that you don't have to have more babies and wait years to get a house/flat. Adults and children are much too important for that. Take direct action and make the points system redundant. This is the way to force the authorities to build more houses, and better ones at that.





**PRISON WARDENS
ENTRANCE EXAMINATION**

Time Allowed 3 Fortnights

**NOTE: Any Candidate Caught
COPYING or CHEATING will be
awarded 20% EXTRA Marks for
INITIATIVE**

1. What Language is spoken in France? Spanish, **FRENCH**, English?
2. Give two important characteristics of the ancient Babylonian empire, with particular reference to the Architecture, Literature and Language **OR** give the name of an Irish Politician?
3. What religion is the Pope? (1) Jewish (2) **CATHOLIC** (3) Anglican. Underline one only.
4. Would you ask William Shakespeare to (a) Build a bridge (b) Lead an army (c) **WRITE A PLAY** (d) Sail an ocean.
5. What is a **SILVER** Dollar made of.
6. What is the time when the big hand is at 12 and the little hand at 3?
7. Approximately how many commandments was Moses given?
8. Spell **LONDON, TAX, BUS, TIME?** (See top of page).
9. What country is the Queen of **ENGLAND** Queen of?
10. What are the people in the North of Ireland called? Easterners, Westerners, **NORTHERNS** or Southerners.
11. Six Kings of England were called George. The last one was called **George the sixth**. Name the other five.
12. (a) Who won World War 2? (b) Who came second?
13. Where does rain come from? (1) Supermarkets (2) Scotland (3) **THE SKY** (4) A big fountain. Name one only.
14. What is a Coat Hanger?
15. Who invented Stephenson's Rocket? Winston Churchill, Eamon Andrews, Benny Hill, **STEPHENSON**.
16. Can you explain **Einstein's Theory of Relativity**? Yes **OR** No.
17. Who is buried in **GRANT'S** Tomb?
18. What time is the News at **TEN** on?
19. Explain Le Chatelain's Principle of Dynamic Equilibrium Forces **OR** Write your Own Name.
20. Where is the Basement of a 3 Storey house?

bits

'Uranium Mining in Donegal' is a new pamphlet from anti-nukes in Belfast. It details the companies looking for uranium in Donegal, the safety aspect, the place of uranium in the nuclear cycle, the experiences of other areas who have had to endure the mining and all that goes with it. 30p (inc. postage) fromJust Books, 7 Winetavern Street, Belfast 1.

Belfast Bulletin no.7 is now out. This issue concentrates on the history and workings of the trade unions in Northern Ireland. There are pieces on women in the unions, health and safety, the unions record on low pay, repression, the involvement with government bodies, and a lot more. Also articles on the decline of Newry and on the Payment for Debt Act. All for 60p (inc postage) from the Workers Research Unit, c/o 52 Broadway, Belfast 12.

The CNT is the 200,000 strong anarchist influenced union in Spain. A union which exists without a bureaucracy of full-time officials. All power lies in the hands of the members through their meetings and elected delegates. The CNT is more than just a good union, it is fully committed to the class struggle and the movement for a free and socialist society.

The Belfast Anarchist Collective is looking for money to send two of its members to Barcelona in December to make a video film about this amazing union. The contrast between our own unions and the CNT would provide much food for thought. The project will cost about £500, some of which has already been raised. If you would like to support this venture, send a few shillings to the BAC at 7 Winetavern Street, Belfast 1.

ANARCHIST WORKERS ALLIANCE

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If you would like to find out more about anarchism and the Anarchist Workers Alliance, contact us at:-

DUBLIN c/o Alan MacSimóin, 49a Leinster Road, Dublin 6.

BELFAST Box AWA, 7 Winetavern Street, Belfast 1.

BLACK THE NUKES



There was a great festival atmosphere at the anti-nuclear gathering in Carnsore this year. Beautiful weather, thousands and thousands of people, good sounds, great childrens area, in fact everything there should be for a good music festival. Except that it was supposed to be a serious protest against nuclear power. There seemed to be much less political content to the rally this year. very few people with the exception of visiting Americans, Germans and French were prepared to get up and speak out at the mass meetings. Some of the workshops were well attended but even so it was still only a small proportion of the huge number of people at the festival. Perhaps it is time to ask some questions about where the anti-nuclear campaign is going and to suggest some tactics.

The government is not going to respond to a movement that can be dismissed by the media as being mainly concerned with running music festivals. Our politics can be fun but we also need to present a much tougher image.

As the AWA leaflets at Carnsore said, the main area of activity must be within the organised working class. Especially within

the ESB and building unions. Raising the call for the blacking of all work on Carnsore. Raising this and the whole nature of nuclear power on the job, in section and branch meetings and at annual conferences. Already the ITGWU and the ESB Officers Association have come out against the nukes. This work needs to be stepped up and consolidated. We have to put over ideas about mass pickets and direct action to stop any work being done. The state will try to use unorganised labour if the unions say no to Carnsore. We have to be ready to stop them.

Nuclear power means radiation, leukaemia, denial of trade union rights, the danger of accidents, new 'security' measures, pollution and a load of other equally undesirable things. It is a serious matter and it requires a serious fightback against the state plans.

Nobody is going to stop the nuclear madness for us, we have to do it ourselves. We can't trust any politician or technician. It is what we can do in our workplaces, communities, unions and organisations that will force the government to back down. Only this and nothing else.

National Schools are no fun

My two small daughters attend the local national school which is managed by the Catholic church. The alternative is an expensive private school with its ruling class values or the Church of Ireland national school. Religious control of education is only an academic issue until you come up against its effects on your own children. The incidents at school are too numerous to mention but a good example is this. My seven year old, whose teacher has been told several times that we are not Catholics, found herself the only non-believer in the religious frenzy of 'first communion' year.

After a few weeks she started to invent tummy-aches so as not to have to go to school. After talking it over it turned out that every Monday morning the teacher asked that all the children who had been to Mass the day before to put up their hands. After one week of not putting up her hand and being the only one to do so, she started to put up her hand to avoid the hassle, then had an attack of fear about going to hell for telling lies.

NOT RELIGIOUS - THAT'S A CRIME

This kind of guilt inducing rubbish goes on all the time because it is built into the school system, its in the school books they use for learning to read, its in the atmosphere of fear and conformity at school and, very importantly, its what your friends in class do and believe.

To be made feel different makes a child feel miserable but just to look for an education that doesn't fill your childs head up with superstition and hang-ups is by definition making them different. You then find yourself continuously confronting your childs desire to be the same, not to be singled out. Far from there being any facilities or support for parents who simply want a secular education for their children, it is treated as a crime and the child is punished for it. Parents who feel the same way need to support each other and to let their children get the support of other children because in this struggle it is often the child who is left out in the front line of conflict.

The state of our Unions

The trade unions are the main organisation of the working class. Throughout the world thousands upon thousands of men and women have suffered blacklisting, jailing, injury and even death in the struggle to establish trade union rights. Without the unions the working class would have no permanent vehicle of struggle to defend and improve its condition.

There is now a powerful bureaucracy of full-time officials who exercise great control over the running of the unions. We enjoy only minimal internal union democracy. What we do have in large measure is class collaboration and an ongoing attack on militancy. The bureaucracy is continually shifting from a role of mediator between workers and bosses to one of open defenders of the status quo.

LEADERSHIP

In response to this there are those who talk about the need for new leaderships, or new unions or even a new form of organisation altogether. We reject all of this because such changes would offer no real alternative. The reason for the development of the bureaucracy was not simply careerists or power-seekers managing to capture positions of authority. It was rather that such positions of authority existed in the first place, for obviously if the power and authority are held by the officials then the initiative is removed from the shop floor. We do not want to change the leadership, we want to do away with the desire for leadership itself. By this we mean leadership as being those who hold power over us or those whom we are expected to follow simply because they are the leadership. We recognise that some rather than others will have more knowledge and experience and so will give a lead but we totally reject the concept of leadership as it now exists. All power and decision making should be returned to the shop floor, to the ordinary worker. We want to see our class become self-confident and politically aware so that there will be no 'need' nor desire for leaders.

RANK AND FILE

We believe that one of the most important means of developing the self-confidence of workers as a class lies in the building of a rank and file movement within the unions. A movement which must be open to all workers, not just shop stewards and branch/section committee members, who agree with the minimum objectives of:

- * Opposing wage restraint and supporting those who are going for increases in excess of the permitted amounts
- * Opposing redundancies and job-cutting productivity deals.
- * Fighting for union democracy, for regular union branch and workplace meetings, and against reliance on the officials.
- * Equality for women workers both in the union and on the job.



INDEPENDANCE

Such a movement can only be built from the bottom up.

The start will come from factory bulletins, unofficial union papers, strike committees and groups of union activists. No grouping without real roots in the workplaces can substitute itself for a genuine rank and file movement.

The movement must be independant, not only of the bosses and the officials but also of the political organisations. We will explain our politics within the movement but we have no intention of trying to seize control. We will oppose any attempt to subject the movement to the control of a political party. Such an independant grassroots movement can bring large numbers of workers into self-managed struggle with the bosses and provide a basis for the fight for workers power and freedom.

(as agreed by the AWA in September, 1979)

THE CHURCH HANGS ON



The decision to set up a new type of school, the community school, sparked some glimmer of hope that education might be removed from the hands of the church. Then came the Deeds of Trust. The church raised its ugly head and made sure that the deeds gave them a disproportionate representation on the Boards of Management. This made a mockery of the use of the word 'community' in describing these schools.

However the Teachers Union of Ireland refused to sign the Deeds of Trust, declaring their contents unacceptable. The TUI executive turned around in October and recommended acceptance of the deeds but they were over-ruled at a special conference and now the decision will be taken by a vote of all the TUI members.

The Board of Management will consist of 10 voting members. 3 religious (appointed by the superiors of the local religious orders), 3 Vocational Education Committee members (remembering that the VEC's usually contain members of the religious anyway), 2 parents, 2 teachers and the school principal, who is the non-voting member.

The selection committee for teachers comprises of five members, 2 from the religious in the school, 1 from the VEC (and god help us if s/he is another religious), the Chief Education Officer and a rep. from the Dept. of Education.

In all the string-pulling the religious have been given a representation completely unrealistic in proportion to their involvement. Also in some areas where they have no teachers, as in Springfield, they will probably be represented on the management and selection boards nevertheless.

Then there is the famous 'faith and morals' clause. In its original version it read 'that no teacher shall at any time say or do anything which may offend or weaken the religious belief or moral teaching or practice of any pupil

in the school'. After a hard fought battle by the TUI, it was amended to read 'A teacher shall not advertently and consistently seek to undermine the religious belief or practice of any pupil in the school'. The TUI are by no means happy with this revised wording but feel that it's the best that they can get. Who the bloody hell is supposed to be running the schools? Is it the Dept. or the church, or are they one and the same?

The above can leave no doubt that the religious are in education to mould morals and principals in their own likeness, anything else is a by-product.

The churches commitment to primary schools is in the region of £2m, less than 1% of what the state puts in. The church has no commitment to education, it has only a selfish interest in brainwashing children, who haven't reached the age reason, with abominable notions of hell, sin, the devil and a hundred other such guilt ridden complexes. Why should the church be able to use public money for its own interests?

The church will claim that it has a right to a substantial say in education because the Irish people 'obviously' want a Catholic education for their children. A load of balls! See the article on the Knocknaheeny school dispute in this issue. Many people, themselves products of Catholic schools, do want similar schools for their children but many others don't. These are the people who get no choice (unless they have lots of money).

The role of the Association of Secondary Teachers-Ireland is a poor one, they objected only to the reserved places for religious, in the deeds. This is a fight against clerical control of our children's education, we hope that the TUI members will throw out these deeds without any hesitation.

Education should be the responsibility of the community. Control by the Dept. is bad enough, but being answerable to the religious is bloody intolerable.

MCDONALDS Strike over but..



McDonalds is no ordinary chip shop. It is the biggest employer of part-time labour in the United States, employing over 150,000 young workers. It now has 5,000 outlets around the world, all operating on the principle of simple food, quick service and cheap labour. They don't like trade unions. McDonalds boss, Ray Croc, has boasted that the unions could not touch him 'with a ten foot pole'.

It came as no surprise when some of the workers in their two Dublin shops joined the ITGWU no.4 branch. Pay was only 85p per hour, a very low rate even for the catering industry. Management refused to recognise the union or even to talk over the phone to the union officials. On March 16th, the union members came out and the pickets went on. The strikers demands were simple - union recognition and an end to low pay.

The strike got McDonalds worried. Most of the full-time and a good number of the part-time workers were out on the picket. They raised the hourly rate to £1 in an attempt to keep the remaining workers inside but even so more came out and joined the union. They then resorted to offering free chips to anyone who would scab by crossing the picket to eat there.

Morale among the strikers was high. Even the arrest of two ITGWU officials, Tony Mulready and Noel Dowling, on picket duty did not frighten them. However McDonalds were not just sitting around. On the basis of truth, half-truth and outright lies they went to the High Court and got an injunction banning all picketing. This was soon changed to allow restricted picketing, only three people at any one time and not at all during the last hour of business. Three strikers, Jimmy Mackin, Noel Boyle and Sean Mrozek, were ordered not to picket at all.

Morale sank when the union officials restricted the fightback against the injunction to legal arguments in the court. They would not support the injunction breaking mass pickets, even though most of the strikers took part in at least some of them. Noel Boyle and Jimmy Mackin continued to picket, again without any support from Liberty Hall.

The officials had given up any hope of winning the strike. The co-ordinating committee set up by the union district council had to disband because of lack of help from no.4 branch officials, John Burke and Tommy White. Indeed these two seemed to spend most of their time trying to dampen down support for the strikers. They did little other than organise some collections - a good and useful exercise but not enough. The co-ordinating committee had at least organised a march which brought out 1,000 workers and their families. They had produced thousands of stickers and had helped out by doing picket duty. But the branch officials would not attend their meetings or give co-operation.

McDonalds could have been closed if their supplies had been stopped. Dockers and airport workers refused to handle the scab food. Then the supplies started to come in through the North. The officials knew that this food was being stored in the Superdine warehouse outside Naas but wouldn't even put a picket on the place. In short they made no real attempt to stop the scab supplies getting in.

The branch officials even went so far as to give a list of 'approved' picketers to the Gardai and to the boss. This gave encouragement to the Special Branch in their harassment of picketers by visiting them at their homes. The Gardai obviously felt, and unfortunately they were right, that the union would not stand up for its members. Pickets were ordered to move away from the doors, to walk on the road, not to explain their case to passers-by.

This was a strike which had enjoyed widespread support and publicity. The POWU members (themselves also on strike at the time) were a great example with their constant support for the picket line. Many members of the ITGWU donated money, joined the picket and raised the issue in their workplaces. Other workers from the FWUI, MPGWU, AGEMOU, ATGWU, AUEW and a host of other unions helped out, as did many housewives, students and socialist organisations.

The strikers should have been the ones running the strike. If this had been so they could have really used this support to ensure a speedy resolution of the dispute. Mass pickets on the scab suppliers, occupations, effective picketing around the clock and various forms of 'direct action'. But the strikers had little or no experience of trade unionism. It was not until near the end of the strike that they really accepted that they had both the right and the capability to take over the running of their own struggle. The role of the officials should simply have of the officials should simply have been to provide the experience and the necessary back up services, not to dictate the running of the strike.

However while things looked gloomy on the picket line, McDonalds were not very happy either. Business was down, their 'one big happy family' reputation had been badly tarnished and their scab customers still had to pass a picket to get in. They looked around for a way out. Since the beginning of the strike they had said that they would not be bound by any decision of the Labour Court, but now they went to the court and when it recommended union recognition they agreed.

The strikers went back to work on Monday 10th September but immediately it was clear that all was not well. The hourly rate was only £1.05p, though most were now getting the grand sum of £1.15p. Still a very low wage, and to make even this small increase worthless everyone only got 35 hours work instead of the previous 40. One striker,

Jimmy Mackin, was refused his job back. Two others, Anne Holmes and Tom Caulfield - both of whom had been on the strike committee, had their job status reduced. Men had to get their hair cut really short, a lot shorter than the scabs who had been employed during the strike. General harassment of union members was the order of the day.

Instead of welcoming those other trade unionists who joined the picket lines, the hacks in Liberty Hall condemned them as 'outside elements'. General Secretary, Michael Mullen, tried to use his influence to stop the good coverage being given to the strikers case in Republican News. To cap it all they then expelled Jimmy Mackin from the union for his decision to continue to picket in defiance of the injunction.

These young workers have done the impossible, they have got a union into McDonalds. They have given a lead to 150,000 other McDonalds workers around the world. But Liberty Hall, not content with giving only minimal support during the dispute, are now doing nothing to defend their members against victimisation. Also they have yet to come up with any real improvement in wages and conditions. As one of the non-union workers asked 'what did you get after six months of walking up and down outside the door?'

It is up to the ordinary members of the ITGWU and especially those in the no.4 branch to kick up hell and demand that proper service be given to these members. Given enough support these young workers can still turn McDonalds into a real union shop.

What is really needed, however, is a strong rank and file movement inside the ITGWU which will fight for a truly democratic and militant union. A movement of ordinary members who will give what aid they can to other members in disputes and who will make real again the concept of workers solidarity.



Despite breaking the Protection of Young Persons (Employment) Act on at least four counts by using child labour no action was taken against McDonalds.
Friends in high places?

If you really want to get ahead in the McDonalds empire, you have to (wait for it.....) go to the Hamburger University of Chicago. On completion of a 10 day course you become a Bachelor of Hamburgerology. Burger and chips intellectuals!

INDUSTRIAL IDEAS

THE 'GOOD WORK' STRIKE

One of the most serious problems facing workers in general and those in the service industries in particular is the way that the media can whip up 'public opinion' against them. One way around this is to consider methods of struggle which hurt the boss without adversely affecting other workers.

The 'good work' strike is a term meaning that workers provide customers with a better service than the boss intended. This is not a tactic which can be used in every situation but it certainly could be used more than it is at present. One of the advantages of this form of industrial action is that it puts the onus on the employer to stop the improved service. It also means that you are drawing your wages while fighting for your claim.

Members of the IWW union in an American canning factory put the labels for the most expensive cuts onto the tins of spread and visa versa. This mean that those who could only

afford spread got the very best of salmon while the rich got the spread. Needless to say the workers claim was conceded quite rapidly by the management.

On the Paris metro tickets are punched as passengers come onto the platform, and a ticket bought on one day can be used on another. Selective strikes by ticket punching personnel enable hundreds of thousands of passengers to travel free. Such strikes, while hitting the company hard, are not resented by the passengers.

In 1968, in Lisbon, drivers and conductors on the trains and busses turned up for work as usual but refused to collect any fares. Transport ran normally but the company suffered a large financial loss.

A few worthwhile suggestions for Irish workers might be, as an alternative to striking, for clerical staff in the ESB and the gas company to destroy records of how much each customer owes, for bus conductors to refuse to collect any fares, for postal workers to accept only un stamped letters. When you think about it there are quite a few possibilities.

Aims and Principles

As agreed by the founding conference of the Anarchist Workers Alliance - December 1978.

- (1) The basic irreconcilable conflict within capitalist society is that between the class which owns and controls the means of production, distribution and exchange - the capitalist class, and the class which produces all the industrial and agricultural wealth - the working class. The social enslavement of the working class forms the basis on which capitalism stands, without it that system could not exist. The state is, by its nature, the instrument of a minority ruling class. To destroy the power of the ruling class we must also destroy the power of the state.
- (2) Russia, China and Cuba are not in any sense of the word socialist countries. They are class societies in which a ruling class of bureaucrats collectively own and control the means of production, distribution and exchange, and where the working class (the sole producer of all wealth) is exploited by that ruling class. These countries we define as corporate state capitalist.
- (3) Anarchist society is based on free communism, with workers councils in free co-operation with each other for each others mutual aid and needs. Anarchist-communists believe in the principle 'from each according to ability, to each according to need'. Each individual in an anarchist society shall be a part of the decision making process affecting all aspects of their lives. Individuals shall have total freedom in all aspects of their everyday lives as long as they do not encroach on the freedom of others.
- (4) Capitalism cannot be reformed in any fundamental way. The only meaningful transformation of society will come through the development of working class organisation and by means of a social revolution. Violence becomes inevitable for the working class to defend itself against the onslaught of the dispossessed ruling class.
- (5) The Anarchist Workers Alliance exists to propagate the idea of anarchism within the working class in Ireland. We work within all rank and file organisations of the working class and seek to inject into them revolutionary consciousness. Only an organised and conscious working class can liberate itself. We do not seek to seize power, either for ourselves or in the name of the class, or to substitute ourselves for it.
- (6) We do not accept, in their totality, the ideas of any one individual. We seek to develop a revolutionary theory suited to the needs and conditions of today, a theory which would draw from the traditions of anarchism and marxism. We urge all who agree with our aims and principals to unite and join the AWA.

REPORT from SPAIN

During the past year Spanish workers have found themselves being harassed by anti-union legislation, redundancies, unemployment and non-payment of wages. They are standing together and fighting back with all means at their disposal.

The Spanish anarcho-syndicalist union(CNT) has been in the forefront of the struggle. They do not tell workers what to do but keep them informed. They show up the wheeling and dealing of the large centralist unions and they fight the anti-union laws.

FIGHTING THE LAW

A law introduced in March of this year declared that in fire brigade, ambulance, hospital and other such services a strike by such persons as the director considers to be providing an essential service is illegal and such persons may be dismissed. The CNT completely rejected this new law and pointed out how it insults working people. They pointed out that whenever such a strike takes place, the workers have always had the moral conscience to provide emergency services. The law whilst purporting to be a piece of moral legislation is nothing more than an attempt to blacken the image of these workers and get a foot in the door for anti-strike laws.

RIO-TINTO

Each year Rio-Tinto workers come together in a general assembly to decide on their demands for the coming year. To put in their claims on wages, conditions, holidays,etc. and to elect delegates to take their demands to the owners. However in the last year a new situation has arisen. The large central unions UGT(social-democratic), CCOO(communist party), SU (centre) and USO (centre) have elected permanent representatives at the place of work. The CNT refused to take part in these elections.



This year at the general assembly the demands were worked out and the union representatives took them to the bosses. They refused to meet the claim and instead produced a list of counter offers. These offers were turned down by the assembly. The union representatives then took it upon themselves to negotiate a new deal with the employers without consulting the assembly. The workers got to hear of what was going on and called a series of one day strikes. Even so the representatives continued to negotiate with the employers and signed, sealed and delivered a new deal without even consulting the members they were supposed to represent. The CNT members at all times refused to have anything to do with these negotiations and worked through the general assembly at all times. This is an example of the union elections held in Spain last year. The

power was taken from the workers and put into the hands of a few elected representatives. There are many cases of bosses refusing to meet with the delegates from the assemblies, preferring to see the union reps. But such behavior comes not only from the employers.



METAL INDUSTRY

In October 1978 the representatives of all the central unions of the metal industry in Northern Spain met to decide what their demands for the coming year would be. The CNT had observers present. After much talking a further meeting was arranged in the local CNT offices where the UGT and the CCOO proposed that the unions representing less than 10% of the workers would be excluded from future meetings. The CNT immediately sided with the minority unions to fight the proposal. The workers rejected the plans of the UGT and the CCOO and called a general assembly. The result was that the UGT and CCOO had to withdraw their proposal and submit themselves to the directions of the general assembly of all the metal workers.

NO PAY ON FRIDAY

Every month numerous anti-worker acts take place. Jailing of strikers as happened in the social services last January. (To their disgrace the CCOO and the other central unions continued to negotiate while their members were in jail)

There are many cases of workers getting no pay at the end of the week and sometimes not for months. The boss claims inability to pay and that is legal in Spain. Yet imprisonment still awaits anyone who steals a few pounds! Workers who get no pay cannot get social security either as they are still employed. Workers who have seized their factories as a weapon with which to negotiate for their outstanding wages are arrested by the police. Such is justice for the worker.

We have some copies of 'Bread and Roses', the paper of the Anarchist Communist Association of Britain. If you would like a copy send a 6½p stamp to the Dublin AWA at the address on p.2

Anarchist Worker

ASSASSINS AT LARGE

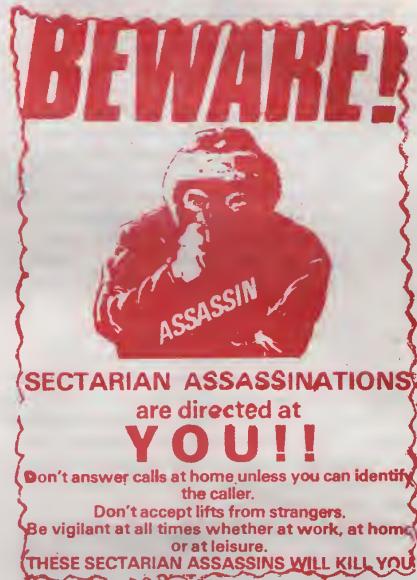
The last few weeks have seen a resumption of activity by the loyalist murder gangs. Sectarian assassinations are happening again.

Over the last decade the loyalist gangs have launched their sectarian attacks whenever they have felt that the British government is not doing enough to defeat the IRA. In fact whenever they have felt that the government is being too 'soft' with the minority.

As before the people of the ghettos have responded by organising their own vigilante patrols to protect the lives of their families and neighbours. Men and women have been out every night since Tuesday 4th. September when three murders were carried out by loyalist gangs in North Belfast.

The British army showed their true face as 'protectors of the people' on Thursday 6th. September. They started to arrest the vigilantes in Ardoyne. So far at least 24 people have been arrested on charges of 'disorderly behavior' and 'breach of the peace'. Three members of one patrol were even charged with 'endangering their own lives'. No doubt some half-witted Brit thought that very funny.

The murders are still happening and the army are still arresting people for the 'crime' of seeking to defend their ares. But the Brits won't stop the peoples self-defence. The vigilante patrols go on!



INLA- NOT O.K.

A woman is shot in both arms and legs. She was Dolours McGuigan of Turf Lodge in Belfast. This was not the work of a loyalist gang. It was claimed by the Irish National Liberation Army. Their excuse was that she had given one of their guns to some young lads who had used it to rob for their own personal gain.

The INLA were supported in this by Women Against Imperialism, who felt that she had got off lightly. They said that 'had the culprit been a man then the punishment would have been more severe'.

There is crime in the ghettos. Some of it is of little concern to us but some of it is directed against working class people, especially the old and can be both vicious and mean. However we can never support such punishment nor can we support the

INLA setting themselves up as judge, jury and punishment squad.

Taken generally punishment does not work. Prisons have never stopped crime. Indeed punishment is only a fancy word for revenge. Even in a war situation it can still be possible to find alternative methods of dealing with anti-people crime. Inquire into the cause of the crime, get the 'criminal' to make restitution, community boycott of those who persist in crimes against ordinary people. These are not great solutions but they are better than the thuggery of beatings and kneecapping.

Crime against people is an inbuilt result of competitive class society, the only real answer is the creation of a truly free and classless society. We can do some patching up but in the end we have to do away with the root cause of such crimes.

No. 3

15p

APRIL 1980

Anarchist Worker



- 1) NO PRISON UNIFORM
- 2) NO PRISON WORK
- 3) FREE ASSOCIATION
- 4) VISITS, LETTERS, PARCELS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
- 5) FULL REMISSION

SMASH
H BLOCK

MARCH AGAINST THE H-BLOCKS

DERRY SUNDAY 20th APRIL
Organised by National H-Block Committee

CRAIGAVON TO LURGAN
SUNDAY 13th APRIL

Organised by Lurgan Relatives Action Committee

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A Series of Video Tapes



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Programme 1 H- BLOCK: A Prisoners Account (2 tapes)

An ex-prisoner describes why the men in Long Kesh are protesting, what the conditions are, and how the authorities are attempting to crush the protesters and what they stand for.



Programme 2 ARMAGH PRISON A Woman Protestors Account (1 tape)

In 1979 on International Womens Day, the RUC viciously attacked women picketers. They were demonstrating solidarity with the women prisoners inside who are demanding political status. It illustrates the fear the British have of this demand reaching public attention.

CONJUGAL RIGHTS FOR MARIE MURRAY?

Marie Murray is a prisoner serving life in Limerick prison. Through the Irish and Strasbourg courts she is trying to win conjugal rights with her husband Noel Murray who is also serving a life sentence, in the Curragh Military prison. At present they have only a one hour visit every three or four months.

The cost of taking a case of this nature could run to £7,000. As it is impossible for any prisoner to obtain legal aid for a civil action, a group of concerned people have organised an appeal and opened a bank account where money can be sent.

Crossed cheques to W.Gaj and RD Stenson, account number 48034381, Bnak of Ireland, Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2. More information can be obtained from RD Stenson, 15 St.Aidan's Park Road, Fairview, Dublin 3.



H- BLOCKS

A half-hour programme containing interviews with ex-blanket men, ex-Armagh protestor relatives and the H Block Committee

THE PROFESSOR AND THE NAZIS

'Mankind Quarterly' is an academic journal which seeks to provide 'scientific' justification for anti-Semitic and racialist ideas. Its contents have included articles of support for apartheid, fulsome praise for a leader of the Ku Klux Klan, commendation for publications of the Racial Preservation Society and so on.

When the position of editor fell vacant last summer there were two main contenders for the job. The post went to one Roger Pearson, a man with a long history of involvement with Nazi organisations. At present he is chairman of the WACL which co-ordinates the activities of several fascist and anti Jewish groups around the world.

The other contender for the job was Richard Lynn, Professor of Psychology at the New University of Coleraine. 'Mankind Quarterly' hopes to make the Nazi ideas about race respectable, we presume Professor Lynn shares these ideas.

ANARCHIST WORKERS ALLIANCE

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DUBLIN c/o Alan MacSimóin, 49a Leinster Road, Dublin 6.

BELFAST Box AWA, 7 Winetavern Street, Belfast 1.

E.E.C. OCCUPATION

This piece has been written for 'Anarchist Worker' by one of the EEC 9. We feel it is important in that it raises the issue of the EEC grants being given for uranium prospecting in Ireland. It also raises once again the question of the Forcible Entry Act.

Over the past few years it has been used against a number of workers occupations, as at the Liffey Dockyard and the Bru Caomhain. We hope that opposition to this law will become a part of the defence campaign around the trial of the EEC 9.

On Wednesday 28th November at 10.20 in the morning seven people walked into the EEC offices in Dublin's Merrion Square, walked upstairs, locked themselves into two empty offices and hung out banner 'Nuclear Power - No Way'. The date is significant, for on the next day the nine EEC rulers were due to meet in Dublin.

Immediately the banner went out about 15 anti-nuclear demonstrators appeared in the street outside waving placards, shouting slogans, cheering, clapping and singing 'no nuclear power - that's what the people say'.

This was the latest and most militant of a long series of anti-nuclear demonstrations. The point of the demonstration is that the EEC are putting strong pressure on Ireland to go nuclear, and offering large grants to multi-national companies to prospect for uranium here. Also the government signed the 'Euratom' treaty committing us to nuclear power and giving the EEC access to any uranium we might have (much of which would end up in nuclear weapons). The reason for the occupation was to search for a way for anti-nukes to confront those responsible for the nuclear nightmare. And it was hoped that if enough support arrived, and the occupation continued, our opposition might be reported worldwide, as the world's press were coming here for the Summit meeting.

Nuclear Energy Board

An Bord Fáinnimh Nucléigh
20 Lower Hatch Street,
Dublin 2.
Tel: 01/766223-01/764375

The occupation, of necessity had to be secretly organised, and therefore it proved difficult to get a large crowd of supporters even for a specifically peaceful demonstration at that hour on a Wednesday morning. That was the only time to do it however, before the tight security descended on the city for the heads of state meeting. It is a credit to all concerned that word did not leak. Those supporters who were there did the job of ten times their number and when the Gardai arrived they could hardly get into the building, let alone eject the occupiers.



The press were there in force and cameras clicked furiously as the police forced their way through the demonstrators outside. A leaflet had been prepared and was given out.

Eventually overwhelming numbers of Gardai arrived in black marlins. No attempt was made to negotiate and they began to smash down the door. The seven occupiers, 5 men and 2 women, had to retreat to the balconies. Four were dragged in immediately but the other window 'somehow got stuck' and the occupation continued a few more minutes while the supporters cheered from the street below. The cops then smashed the window and the other three were dragged in, searched and arrested, while the cops tried to figure a way to get them out.

After some delay the rear lane was cordoned off, police vans backed in and the seven brought and thrown into the vans. Meanwhile the supporters had spotted this and about six of them slipped past the cordon along with the press and camera people. Two of the supporters were grabbed and thrown into the vans - hence the 'EEC 9'.

The seven were charged with Forcible Entry and Occupation and Malicious Damage of £1,200, which was done by the cops smashing their way in. Of the two supporters one was charged with obstruction and resisting arrest and the other with obstruction and assault on a cop. Five of those arrested got out on bail that day and four were held overnight. Most of those charged face a likely sentence of six months plus fines. All are going for trial by jury and defending the case. They want to use the case to counter the heavy pro-nuclear and pro-uranium mining publicity.

They have appeared in court on a number of occasions so far and pickets have been held outside by supporters. Also a brilliant street theatre has been performed. Thousands of leaflets have been handed out and a very successful benefit gig held. The mass

meeting of anti-nukes in Limerick gave them unanimous support. The trial will start sometime in April.

Was it worth it? Certainly the publicity was spectacular with front page stories and photos in the dailies and followup stories in the journals. Also within the anti-nuke movement the occupation represented a radical step forward, showing that many anti-nuke activists will go beyond the law when necessary to confront the state. Anti-nuke activity is increasing again at a local level after the successful mass meeting in Limerick. In Dublin there have been slide shows, exhibitions, leaflets, public meetings. A conference for trade unionists is happening, the Dun Laoghaire group is getting together with other east coast groups to do something about the radioactive pollution from Windscale.

Several groups are after the uranium prospectors in Donegal, Carlow, Kilkenny and Cork.

The EEC 9 Defence Collective can be contacted at 60, Marlborough Road, Dublin 4.



The Heavy Gang is back

On March 8th, about 300 people took part in a picket and road blockage outside a Dublin Garda Station. It was organised by the Prisoners Rights organisation as a protest against the beating up of a local man by Gardai in that station.

On Thursday 28 February, Michael Joe Kavanagh, a young labourer living in the Crumlin area of Dublin was arrested under Section 30 of the Offences Against the State Act. He was taken to Sundrive Road Garda Station where he was questioned about two robberies, one of which had taken place a week previously and the other two years ago. The police involved in Kavanagh's arrest and interrogation were Detective Gardai Gleeson, O'Leary, Coyle and Murphy.

In the first round of questioning Kavanagh was slapped on the face and punched in the ribs; his hair was pulled and his testicles were squeezed. In agony and to draw

attention to himself he put his hand through a window. A doctor was called and attended him.

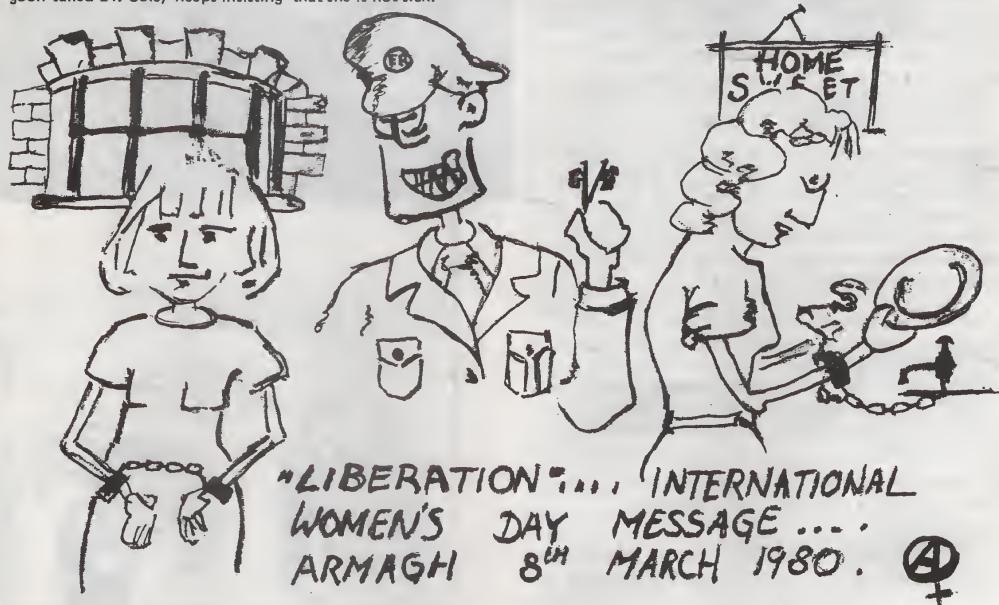
After the doctor left the interrogation resumed. He was forced onto a mattress and stripped of his clothes. A plastic bag was pulled over his head. Matches were lit and as their flames extinguished they were jabbed against his thighs and penis. His head was pushed forward and he was forced to watch the procedure through the plastic bag, which gave him a terrible sense of suffocation. He vomited in the cell.

It appears that the 'Heavy Gang' are back to their old tricks - the way to get a conviction is to get a 'confession' and the way to get a 'confession' is to terrorise the suspect. The Prisoners Rights Organisation is sending details of Michael Joe Kavanagh's case to Amnesty International to illustrate to them that the illtreatment of suspects which prompted their intervention in the Republic in 1977 is still going on.

Women in Prison

As well as the 'blanket men' of the H-Blocks there are 33 women on protest in Armagh jail. These women are allowed to wear their own clothes (as are all women in British jails) but locked up for twenty three hours a day and are denied their remission. They are also subjected to beatings and are denied proper medical treatment. One such case is Pauline McLaughlin whose weight has gone down to six stone ten pounds. She also suffers frequent spells of vomiting and dizziness. Despite this the prison doctor, a goon called Dr. Cole, keeps insisting that she is not sick.

On February 7th, about 40 male warders attacked the women who responded by throwing their dinner plates at these scroos. In retaliation the protesting women are being denied washing and toilet facilities and are now reported to be in a filthy state in stinking cells. Two of the women, Marie McClenaghan and Eileen McConville, have caught a disease similar to scabies. If the prison authorities keep this up there will soon be little difference between Armagh and the H-Blocks of Long Kesk.



Marie is Free!

Marie McMahon is no stranger to police harassment. For the past 11 years she has been active in the womens movement and in anti-repression groups. This has not exactly endeared her to the Gardai. She has been subjected to raids, special branch cars parked outside her door and when she is out driving in her car there is a good chance that she will be stopped by the forces of law and order. Last year they even tried (unsuccessfully) to frame her on a prostitution charge.

Now they have dug up an old charge from three years ago. In 1977 Marie was arrested and brought to court on a charge of putting up posters advertising a public meeting about the banning of the womens magazine, 'Spare Rib'. She was fined and ordered to sign a peace bond. She paid the fine but refused to sign the bond. In other words she was not prepared to give an undertaking not to put up any more posters.

In February of this year she heard that the Gardai had a warrant for her arrest, that she was to serve 7 days in Mountjoy womens prison because she had not signed the bond all of three years ago. She went down to Donnybrook Garda station but they claimed that they had lost the warrant.

A couple of weeks later she was awakened at 6.30 in the morning and carted off to Mountjoy. As soon as friends knew what had happened they set about organising a picket to draw attention to her case. That evening about 30 men and women picketed the



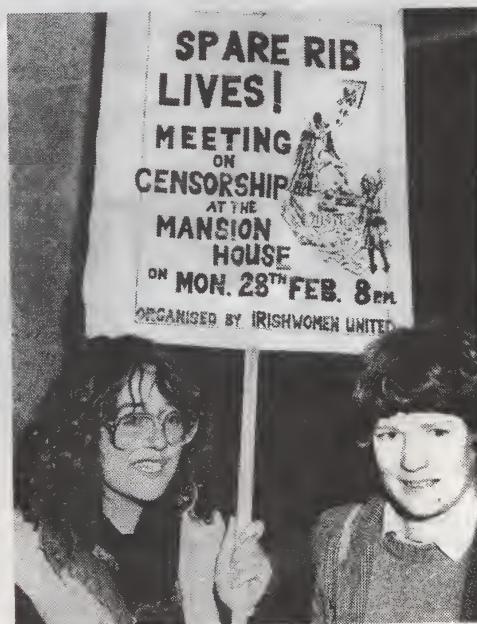
prison. On the following Tuesday over 150 people turned up. It was a good militant picket, we even

stopped a prison van from getting in. We also put a picket on the special branch car watching us, the branchmen inside didn't like it one bit and drove off at speed.

After an hour we went around to the back of the prison and shouted messages of support to Marie and all the other prisoners. And they shouted some back.

The following day she was released pending a High Court ruling on the legality of the delay in serving the warrant. On her release she went down to Donnybrook Garda station where 25 supporters were holding another picket demanding her release. When she arrived there was a good bit of cheering and chanting.

We all felt that the publicity we gained by having pickets will make the Gardai lay off her, at least for a while. Given the short time there was to get things organised everyone felt that the activities had been a good success.



We reclaim all responsibility!

Articles do not necessarily represent the views of AWA members, indeed some of the articles are written by non-members. The paper does, however, reflect in a general way the politics of the AWA. Any actual policy statements will be clearly marked as such.

Editorial Collective

What we did on our Holidays!

Two of us from the Belfast Anarchist Collective went to Madrid last December to record on film the 5th national congress of the CNT. (The CNT is the Spanish anarchist workers union) The most important thing is that the congress happened at all after 42 years of fascist repression. The world's only large scale working class organisation with libertarian structures and revolutionary aims successfully re-emerged.



the directing, explaining and refereeing. There was of course much disagreement and the chair (in the nature of human ways) was not always impartial.

And behind all this was the tension and struggle between the various tendencies. Three of these we were told, were the syndicalists (reformist), the anarcho-syndicalists (direct action against the bosses) and the FAlistas (the 'pure' anarchists). And within even these there is for example the 'global' tendency of some anarcho-syndicalists who want the CNT to embrace the ecology and sexual liberation movements. There was also much talk of the young - old gap, Francoism having killed the hope of a generation.



By way of an introduction it is now Spain's 3rd largest union, is opposed to that country's social contract (read 'national understanding'), has no bureaucracy, practices direct action not mediation and calls for the abolition of both capitalism and the state.

Each night most of the almost 1,000 delegates argued until 2 in the morning, and on the 7th night they stayed up to 9a.m. This was all endured so that everyone could have their say and after 42 years there was a lot to say. Each day a four page bulletin of reports, photos and events was made available by a print co-op who worked all night to get it ready.

In contrast to Irish and British trade union conferences the business was largely carried out from the floor, with the eight or so rows having a microphone and lead each. Things were held together by the chair committee (changing each day) which did

But one of the things that makes Spanish anarchism and the CNT different is their ability to work and argue together. But here I must say that the obvious and most important difference is that Spanish Anarchism has very deep roots in the class struggle against capitalism and the state.

Running parallel to the congress at night was a 'cultural' week in a hired theatre with films, music, lectures and plays. It showed the popularity of anarchism outside the workplace as many of those who attended were at school or college. The students of Madrid had paid dearly that week for their protest over education cuts. Two were shot dead by police and a young girl died from injuries received the previous week.

It is important to mention the Ateneos. These are social and educational clubs where local anarchist groups hold meetings, show films & plays and they act as a social contact point. They seem to generate much of the enthusiasm and organisation lacking in this 'pub' island.

The best testimony which we have brought is the video tapes. We want these to be our contribution towards anarchist education and propaganda. At the moment we are drawing up a catalogue which will be available within the next month or so. The tapes will contain interviews with CNT members of various experiences, about the CNT revival, the congress and their hopes for the future. There are also interviews with observers from labour and anarchist groups of other countries.

We would like to thank all those who helped to send us over by donating to our appeal fund.

STATE INTERFERENCE



In the 19th. and early 20th. century workers all over the world began to organise themselves to fight the exploitation and misery in which they found themselves. The Governments of the day tried to defeat the early trade unions by the use of force but after a while they realised that this wouldn't work. The workers were fighting back and there were a lot more of them!

It was necessary to solve the problem by other means. The government realised that they would have to talk to the unions. The union officials were soon overwhelmed with their new found sense of power and they began to be drawn into the system, eventually to be party to decisions taken against the interests of the working class. When the government had realised that they could not control the workers they decided to use the union officials to do their job for them.

However more and more ordinary union members are beginning to resist this bureaucratic control and are starting to manage their own struggles through their own strike committees and by refusing to allow the officials to decide whether or not they can go on strike (unofficial strikes). This is a situation which the government doesn't like as it brings them back to square one - a working class movement over which they have no control, either direct or indirect.

In line with this thinking we have seen proposals to bring in legislation against unofficial strikes. The excuse is that unofficial strikes are crippling the country. Yet in 1979 such strikes have accounted for only 9% of all work days lost through strikes. The government is not that worried about the work days lost but it is worried about workers running their own disputes without going to anyone else for 'permission'.

When they believe that the time is right the state will try to introduce such legislation with regard to certain service jobs e.g. ESB maintenance engineers, claiming that a few hundred people shouldn't be allowed to 'hold the country to ransom' and this argument will probably receive a good deal of support. However once legislation is introduced against one group of

workers it will be extended to other 'vital services'.

This will lead to the unions fighting on the issue of what constitutes a vital service and losing sight of what the real struggle should be about : against all legislation which tries to control and institutionalise the class struggle. Trade unionists must therefore be ready to take up the fight at the first sign of such legislation. We can't rely on the leaders, especially when some of them like Harry O'Sullivan have said that 'such legislation might not be altogether unwelcome'; How can we rely on leaders like O'Sullivan, Mullen & co. who have forgotten what it is like to have to fight for ones rights, who have no need to strike. How can we rely on anyone other than ourselves, for nobody else has our interests in mind. The struggle must come from below, from the ordinary worker.

There are also other legislative suggestions in the air. That strikes can only take place after a secret ballot of the members. The state should not be allowed to dictate to us on how to run our unions, we can make any such decision ourselves.

The unofficial strike is an important element in the working class struggle because it is workers taking direct action in their own interests. The attitude that only struggles which are recognised by the union leaders and officials are valid is an insult to us all. It suggests that workers are not capable of making their own decisions.

Still more important is the talk of making secondary pickets illegal. To a degree this is happening already through the use of court injunctions but it is not always possible to enforce such injunctions so the bosses and the state want tougher laws. This type of legislation would hit at the very heart of the trade union movement, it is aimed at undermining the vital role that solidarity among workers plays in many disputes. The steel strike in Britain is an example of secondary picketing being of great importance, as it stops private firms using their supplies to weaken the struggle. Secondary picketing is necessary until such time as that the concept of workers solidarity is such that workers would automatically support each other.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

There now exists a 'new curriculum' in the primary schools. This relates to all subjects. Close on its heels has followed the new curriculum for religious education. In existence now for 4-5 years, it is a much more insidious way of implementing the indoctrination of religion here. The major basis of its effectiveness lies in its 'integration' prospects with other curricular subjects. This means that the ideology of Catholicism pervades all the other subjects and by implication the national school teacher is the medium for achieving this. We are seen as the hope for the preservation of the 'faith of our fathers' in the upcoming generations of school children.

Up till very recently there was no such openness associated with the teacher in this role. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, the intake to the teaching sector disposed to any possibility of dissension among the ranks and secondly the church seemed to have the person power to implement its will without any great difficulty.

The situation is now changing. Awareness is growing, especially amongst younger teachers, that their freedom of choice in the matter is being blatantly denied to them. This has manifested itself in the form of liberal demands at teacher congresses to allow religion and also in the formation of a rank and file teachers group which has as one of its five major aims, the democratic and secular control of education, which is of course a far more political stand. These people are evidently tired of seeing themselves as church hacks and are prepared to get up and say it. Organised opposition is developing and the Church's hackles are rising as a result. Due to its lack of person power the Church is extremely conscious of teachers alliance in the area of strategy. Without us to implement its policies it would be impotent. Children are seen as the vehicles to their parents who have strayed from the straight and narrow. The new course covers this area very well. It has been planned so that parental involvement and co-operation is essential to its implementation. Children are issued with texts which have a certain amount of information directed specifically towards parents. 'What do we do at home' and 'Dear Parents' are common headings here.

Ceremonies, such as first confession, first communion, and confirmation have been adapted in recent years, again to involve parents. Presence at church is essential where parents have to sponsor their children in communion etc. For a parent who can withstand the text book pressure, it might not be so easy to absent him/herself from a vital church ceremony where a child would be seen to be stigmatised by such an absence.

Dear Comrade,

The Berehaven News from Castletownbere, West Cork got nationwide coverage on TV, radio and in the national press when they exposed the property dealings of the Catholic church in that area. St. Brendans Trust, set up by the Kerry Dioceses had bought up old national schools throughout the Beara peninsula for very low prices and had recently sold some of them at an enormous profit against the wishes

of the local people who wanted to use them as community centres. It is an issue which once again raises the whole question of church control, this time its activities in speculation. The whole question of land and property deals by the church is obviously a very sensitive issue and if the facts were known about many of their land deals, especially where they involve land for building

hospitals and schools in the cities, they would be shown up in their true colours, as capitalists with clerical collars.

Any reporting that shows this up, particularly at community level, is welcome because it helps to loosen the grip the church has on peoples' heads.

Mary O'Sullivan,
Ballymun, Dublin.

Letters

This psychological manipulation has been used in many instances to force parents back to church attendance themselves. 'get Mommy and Daddy to bring you to Mass' or 'teach Mommy and Daddy what Jesus told you today' is hard to battle against for vulnerable parents. It has been known for teachers of 'doubtful cases' to actually call for children at their homes on the morning for first communion and bring them to church in cases of default by parents.

At the level of church organisation on the issue, things have been moving also. The Mater Dei Catechetical Institute has undertaken to organise meetings for primary teachers and their respective priests/managers. These meetings have a primary purpose of seeing that Church Educational Policy is being effective. Out of these gatherings at which people are filled with the positive relevance and religious reinforcement, are supposed to grow quarterly meetings in schools for parents, teachers and parish clergy. This is aimed at getting grass roots support with teachers being used as 'responsible organisers'. A lot of these meetings have gone ahead with little or no opposition by teachers involved. At the same time they have not been greeted with overwhelming delight. The fact that they take place in the evenings and that the National teachers union has a current dispute with religious management would seem to offer some potential for protest. Union activists have been working through their branches on the religious issue and there is a lot of support for platforms presented. The fact there is quite a strong anti clerical feeling traditionally amongst teachers is positive proof of the potential that is there.

Let us have no doubts about the fact that the Church is gathering its forces and has been forced into an openly declared battle against people who want to get them out of Education. This is manifesting itself in a lot of insidious counter reaction such as the formulation of religion programmes. The arousal of consciousness amongst teachers would seem to be a key area to work on in the immediate future if we are to have success that we aim for in the field of Education generally.

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ARMAGH PICKET Gets International Support

The Anarchist Workers Alliance supported the International Womens Day picket in Armagh which was protesting for the re-introduction of political status for republican prisoners along with the men in the H Blocks,

Last year, Women against Imperialism organised a similar picket on March 8th, and eleven women were arrested by the Special Patrol Group in a particularly vicious manner. The court case against the women still remains unheard, but, international support has been tremendous, particularly from across the water. Women against Imperialism initiated the Armagh Protest Committee at the end of January to open out the campaign and to build broad based support for a mass picket outside the Armagh Gaol. The committee was supported by Anarchist, Feminists, Socialists and Republicans.

As well as the five demands of the Smash H Block Campaign, attention was drawn to the problems that women face as women inside the Gaol. There are no adequate sanitary or medical facilities, no unit for mothers with their children, no adequate post and ante natal care and valium is prescribed for everything 'from pregnancy to anorexia nervosa.

Six hundred supported the picket, the vast majority being women. There were short speeches from women, both Irish women and British women and there was a speech from an ex prisoner of Armagh Gaol. A blanket man spoke in support of the women inside. The names of the women prisoners were read out amidst cheers from the crowd and banging from the women inside the prison. Women had travelled from all over Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales, France and Italy to the picket.

It was a resolute and self disciplined picket, in contrast to the young loyalist mob that had gathered 100 yards away to watch and jeer. It is ironic that three loyalist women are on punishment for supporting the republican women against the violence of the screws. It was good to see so much International support but we wondered where all the local people who support the H Block marches were. Armagh is important and the issue has benefitted from the solidarity shown by the Womens Movement in the North in particular. However, more needs to be done on the issue and now is the time to do it.



No. 4

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MAY 1980

Anarchist Worker

STRIKE BACK!

CUTS in public spending have been increasing in Northern Ireland since the Tories came to power, though it is worth remembering that it was Labour who started the ball game. In the South there have been cutbacks in many areas since the budget.

It means that if you are sick there will be longer waiting lists for operations and less facilities, in schools there will be bigger classes and fewer text books. Housing, as always, will see the lists get longer and longer. And so it will go on, we will still have to pay tax but we will get less and less back for it. But that's the way of all governments.

Public sector workers, teachers/Corpo & county council employees/health board staff/nurses/etc. will be faced with lower wage increases and even possibly a total pay freeze. There will be more redundancies and 'natural wastage', less jobs all round.

Now is the time to start fighting the cuts, north and south. Already there have been marches in the North bringing thousands of people out from work. The ICTU didn't go out of its way to try to make them really big but we all know by now that

we will have to do it ourselves in our union section and branch meetings.

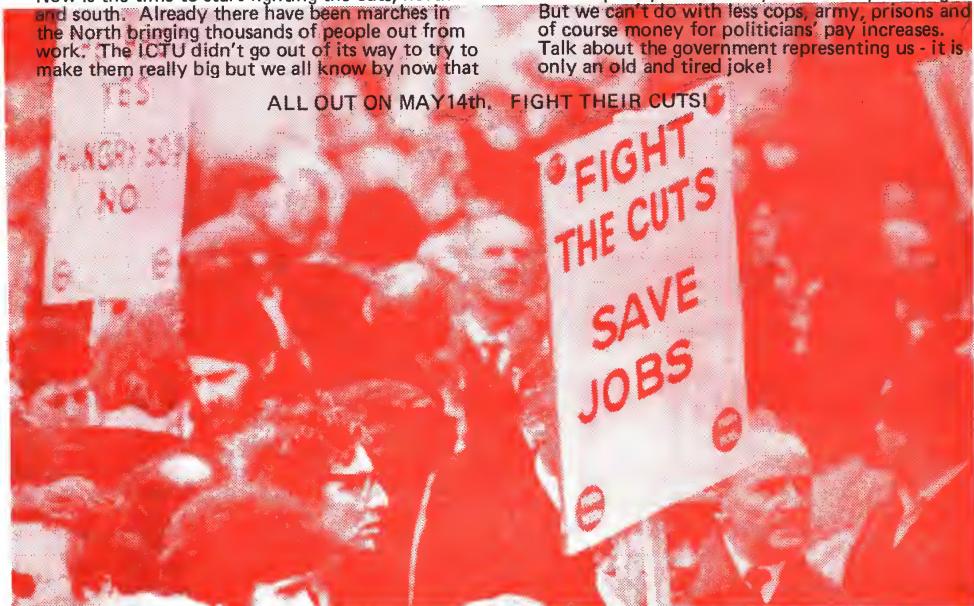
Public sector workers should get together at rank and file level and refuse to implement any cuts. Closures should be met with occupations and sympathy strikes, no job losses or wage restraint should be accepted.

The ICTU has called for a one day strike against the cuts in Northern Ireland for May 14th. Get your workmates to down tools and come out for the day, ask your tenants association to support the marches.

The only cuts that are acceptable are in the areas of defence(the army), policing (the RUC & prisons) handouts to the bosses and the like. Of course these are the only areas which aren't being cut. According to the politicians we can get by with less hospitals, less schools, less houses, less wages. But we can't do with less cops, army, prisons and of course money for politicians' pay increases. Talk about the government representing us - it is only an old and tired joke!

ALL OUT ON MAY14th.

FIGHT THEIR CUTS!



MAYDAY

ORIGINS

May 1st 1886 saw 340,000 workers striking all over the United States demanding the eight hour day. The following Monday in Chicago police fired on strikers at the McCormick Harvester Works and six workers were killed. The next day a protest meeting was broken up by the police.

In the ensuing fighting a bomb was thrown at the police, killing one outright and fatally wounding seven others. Evidence later came to light that the bomb had been thrown by a police agent.

The bosses, however, used this incident as an excuse to victimise leading trade unionists and to attempt to break the eight hour day movement.

After a farcical trial (with a jury composed of businessmen, their clerks and a relative of one of the dead policemen) four anarchists were hanged. A fifth committed suicide before they could execute him.

In 1888 the American Federation of Labour continued the eight hour day movement with May 1st as a day of action. In 1890 the Paris conference of the Second International declared Mayday as an international day of solidarity for the eight hour day. That year demonstrations took place all over Europe and America.

RITUAL BORE

Ninety four years after the Chicago demonstration, where are we? Just

another institution, just another big yawn. We have timid marches and then stand around to listen to boring (and usually pretty meaningless) speeches from equally boring trade union officials. And to think that Mayday was once a day when the working class displayed its strength, its organisation and its spirit.

What is important is that 'once upon a time' there was a show of strength and solidarity on an international level - and we can do it again. It could once more become a symbol of a fighting working class. This won't happen overnight but we can make a start by dumping the politicians and all the other would-be leaders, and beginning a fight for our own class interests. More pay, shorter hours, womens freedom, better housing..... all as part of the struggle for a socialist society, without bosses or rulers, with workers power and real freedom.



ANARCHIST WORKERS ALLIANCE

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If you would like to find out more about anarchism and the Anarchist Workers Alliance, contact us at:-

DUBLIN c/o Alan MacSimóin, 49a Leinster Road, Dublin 6.

BELFAST Box AWA, 7 Winetavern Street, Belfast 1.

Teachers & Religion

TAKE ON THE CHURCH

A new mood of militancy was felt at the recent conferences of the teacher unions. The Teachers Union of Ireland passed a motion for a 50% pay increase. The ASTI called for payment for parent/teacher meetings held outside school hours. But the most progressive and challenging motion came from the Irish National Teachers Organisation who demanded that they no longer be required to teach religion as a condition of their jobs. A teacher should have the right to refuse to teach religion for various reasons, he/she may be of a different denomination, may have no interest in religion or may strongly object to the whole concept of religion.

church will put up a fight. They fully realise that their greatest potential is at primary level, where the child is too young to think objectively about the misinformation he/she is force-fed. However it needs the teachers to pass on the information because it doesn't have the numbers to do so itself.

At last there is a possibility of having some sort of secular education. Religion should not be taught in the school anyway. Anarchists hold that people can practice religion freely if they want to but we object the brainwashing of infants in the schools.

SECULAR EDUCATION

One thing is sure, and that is that the

CURRAGH

About fifty ex-prisoners who had been held in the Curragh Military Detention Centre and some supporters protested in Dublin on April 19th as part of the campaign to have the Curragh closed down.

TEMPORARY PRISON

In May 1972 there was a major riot in Mountjoy prison and most of it was burned down. A law was rushed through the Dail to allow the old military detention centre to be used as a civilian prison until the 'joy was rebuilt. A two year limit was put on the act.

However it has twice been extended and comes up again in the Dail on May 22nd. Civilian prisoners are being held in the custody of the army.... a sign of things to come?

VISITING COMMITTEE

Even the state appointed visiting committee have called for closure. The Prisoners Rights Organisation is holding a series of protests through the month of May. Support them.

Jailed

Former prisoner Des Keane went back inside on April 22nd. He received 8 years in the Special Criminal Court for an attempted robbery. For his defence his solicitor Mr. McEntee pointed out to the court how Des had been sacked from two jobs, one in the Dept. of Education and one in the post office simply because he had appeared on an R.T.E. programme dealing with the conditions of civilian prisoners being held in the Curragh Prison. Also his solicitor showed the court how

difficult it was for Des and another defendant as well as for ex-prisoners generally to secure jobs.

The judges said they would listen sympathetically but they had 'a duty to society' and so exercised their God given right to put people away for years. The 'Irish Press', the only paper to cover the case, ignored Mr. McEntee's plea and just covered the trial on a law and order basis.

The Special Court has no jury and survives on police 'evidence'. The public are harassed, should they enter it, by the Special Branch. And the Press ignore it.



—public meeting—

'ANARCHISM'

WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

Can we really live without bosses and governments? What do the anarchists have to say about workers control, the trade unions, personal freedom and sex? What else do they have to say?

THURSDAY MAY 8th 8 p.m.

ATGWU Hall, 112 Marlboro Street.
(opposite Abbey Theatre)

Organised by the Dublin group of the
Anarchist Workers Alliance

'RESISTANCE' a new anarchist paper from Dublin has just appeared with articles on nukes, prisons, and a load of other things. 16 pages for 15p from ABC Bookshop, 7 Marlboro Street, Dublin 1. The bookshop is open on Thursday and Friday afternoons and all day Saturday.

'OUTTA CONTROL' the newsheet of the Belfast Anarchist Collective comes out monthly and can be had for 5p from them at Just Books, 7 Winetavern Street in Smithfield. The shop is open from 10am-5pm every day except Wednesday.

'BUSWORKER' the rank and file paper by and for bus crews is getting bigger and better all the time. For a copy send 25p (that includes postage) to them c/o Site 10, Glasnaon Road, Dublin 11.

bits

SAFETY & WORK



Safety in industry has for a long time been a haphazard procedure. There are general issues which arise when the product being produced or the process used in producing it is considered dangerous, and there are the more local issues regarding machinery and workplace conditions which constitute a safety problem. With regard to the second issue the workers involved are the ones who could take up the issue by having safety reps. on each shift and shop or other place of work. These reps. must be prepared to take decisions where they think a danger exists or where a worker reports a possible safety hazard. This would involve shutting down machinery until the necessary repairs have taken place and issuing a call to workers not to enter an area where safety regulations are being ignored. The management attitude will usually be to carry on with the work, 'we will get somebody to sort out the problem'. This can often take hours or days or until such time as an accident takes place. It is usually only at this point that they pretend to have any concern. Production figures have a higher priority for the management than safety, which is why workers themselves must take action.

ASBESTOS

Safety committees should be set up in the factory - mainly as an information gathering centre which can advise the reps. and the workers. The committee would play an important role in general safety concerns such as the danger to health posed by asbestos, lead radiation, etc. Asbestos is an issue which should have been taken up more rigorously by pointing out that the present safety limit of two parts of asbestos dust per million parts of air (p.p.m.) was not based on any scientific

proof. It was a figure which was just picked out of the air on the realisation that the previous 12p.p.m. safety limit was not safe. They are now claiming that 2p.p.m. is safe even though they will have no proof for at least another 20 years. But this is not the only problem. Conditions in factories can be measured by using a dustcounter. When a count of over 2 p.p.m. is recorded a recheck is generally made and if it is still above 2 p.p.m. action is taken. But how long has the count been over the limit before the before it is even noticed. Asbestos is dangerous full stop. To say that a certain level is safe is simply untrue.

LEAD POISON

A factory in America has recently informed its female staff that they must become sterilised if they wish to continue working there : no reason was given. However when it is realised that lead is one of the ingredients used in the manufacturing process

process, then the companies line of action becomes very clear. Lead plays havoc with the nervous system as well as the brain tissue and the general biological system - hence the risk of babies being born with severe deformities.

The permissible level of radiation in nuclear power plants is equivalent to 300 X-rays per year, what doctor would recommend such exposure to radiation.

These are the type of issues which would have to be researched factory safety committees. We need to be informed of the dangers we are risking at work and the bosses won't do this, we have to find out for ourselves and pass the information on to other workers in the same industries. There is no other way.

—Stuff the points system—

In May 1979 there were 5,815 families, comprising 17,532 people, on the waiting list for housing from Dublin Corporation. In May of the same year there were 2,407 families sharing with another family in Corporation housing. 2,243 families with no bathroom and another 2,162 families seeking a transfer because of overcrowding. There was a total of 6,464 on the transfer list, showing a very high level of dissatisfaction with existing housing schemes. 1,700 families want to transfer out of Ballymun alone. Between November 1979 and November 1982 about 1,500 new dwellings will be built by the Corporation. This means that those on the waiting list now have a 1 in 5 chance of getting a house in the next year. What the other 4/5 are supposed to do the Corpo haven't said.

SQUATTERS

In 1978 584 families were registered as squatters. A rough estimate of the present rate of squatting is about twenty places a month but the eviction rate is about the same. In some flat complexes in the inner city families who have been squatting in 'low demand' flats are now being evicted. Often they are rehoused only a few doors away, which just goes to show how pointless all the rules and regulations are. Squatting is self-help housing, it's not always great but it's better than just sitting around waiting for that letter from the Corpo (the one that never seems to come).

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance of Corpo houses and flats is a sore point in many areas, especially in the inner city. Maintenance expenditure in 1978 was a total of £2,579,000 which worked out at something like £181 per flat. A legal precedent was established last year when a tenant sued the Corpo on the

grounds that they were legally obliged to provide proper maintenance. Other tenants associations are now suing the Corpo for proper repairs. Using the law like this won't provide more houses but it can get your repairs done.

RENT STRIKE

A more effective form of action is rent strike. Even though there is no 'official' rent strike on at the moment, apart from the NATO refusal to pay rent increases, £850,000 is withheld by tenants every year.

POINTS SYSTEM

The points system of allocation is breaking down, even within its own framework. 1/3 of all new housing is allocated to special category cases, that is people whose housing need is so urgent that no points are allocated. The present government (or any possible Fine Gael/Labour one for that matter) is not going to build enough new housing or rehabilitate enough of the existing stock to make any real difference. The people on the housing list will continue to suffer while building societies and private landlords reap huge profits from the housing shortage. The abolition of rates on domestic houses also gave the landlords a profit of, wait for it..... £8,500,000.

In 1979 the Irish Permanent Building Society put £7.5million of depositors' money, not into loans but into the purchase of one office block in Stephens Green. This purchase made a profit of £2.1 million for the Gallagher Group who had bought it seven (yes! 7) days earlier.

Life is like a shit sandwich. They get the bread and we get the shit.



CARRY ON PICKETING

More and more strikers are being injunctioned, one way the bosses hope to cut down picketing. From an annual average of 4 per year in the period 1958-1968 the number of injunctions granted has risen to over 50 per year at the moment, that's one every week.

The bosses know that the state exists to defend their interests and 9½ times out of 10 the courts will take the side of the employer if there is any doubt. But what exactly is an injunction and how does it work?

- (1) An injunction is a court order restricting one or more people from doing something. In this case it stops workers from picketing, or restricts the numbers involved or the manner of the picketing.
- (2) Injunctions are usually granted after an ex parte application. this means that only one side has to be there, the boss. The workers do not get any notification until the order has been granted.
- (3) An interim injunction is the first stage and usually lasts for about a week. The next stage is the interlocutory injunction which lasts until the granting of a further order or the hearing of the case. This can take quite a while, sometimes several months.
- (4) If the case goes to an interlocutory hearing a detailed investigation of the position of both sides takes place. The boss has to show that the 'balance of convenience' favours him getting the order. This means that he has to

show that he stands to lose more than the strikers if he doesn't get his injunction. He will of course point out that he will continue to lose business as long as picketing continues. The strikers are losing their wages but judges usually take the view that they are losing their pay 'by their own choice'.

You can appeal to the High Court or even to the Supreme Court but this will cost you a load of money and may take up to two years before the case is given a hearing. You have to stay out on strike all this time to keep within the rules of the game. The only alternative to this, apart from giving up, is to defy the injunction. If you take this course of action you can usually expect little help from your union officials.

Workers have told the courts to 'go to hell' and have kept on picketing in defiance of the courts. In 1977 the ESB site at Poolbeg was injunctioned but the strikers ignored the law and kept on picketing. The Gardai, despite what they will sometimes claim, cannot arrest you for breaking an injunction. It is up to the boss to go along to the court and get a warrant to have you committed for contempt. The ESB chickened out and no action was taken against anyone on the picket line

In another case Gouldings said that they would ask for the jailing of Mick Rooney for stopping the Tara mines ore train whilst being subject to an injunction. He was held to be in contempt of court but he refused to 'purge his contempt' by apologising. The judge ordered that he be jailed for seven days. A stay of execution was given for 48 hours and then nothing more was heard about the case. As with the ESB, Gouldings were afraid to push the issue. They still remember the uproar when the government jailed striking power workers in the 1960's, such was the response from the trade union movement that taxis had to be sent up to Mountjoy prison to bring the men home.

HOW MILITANT?

Over the past few months there has been much written in the press about the MILITANT grouping and their activities inside the British Labour Party. This piece has been written by ex-members of their front organisation in Northern Ireland - the Labour and Trade Union Group.

Until fairly recently there has been only one 'revolutionary' organisation in Ballymena. This is the trotskyist MILITANT who operate here, as in other towns in the province, under the name of the Labour and Trade Union Group. Officially, of course, the MILITANT has no connection at all with the LTUG. But then they enjoy working under a cloak of secrecy.

Like most other trotskyist groups they are very dogmatic, fundamentalist and authoritarian. Any argument is answered with a quote from Lenin, Trotsky, etc in the same way as Ian Paisley's DUP (Dictatorial Unionist Party) quote the Bible. An interesting example is when talking about the Kronstadt revolt (the first socialist revolt against the bureaucracy in Russia- 1921) they quote Lenin and Trotsky to show that the Kronstadt sailors

were a 'bunch of counter-revolutionaries who wanted special privileges'. This is all rather quaint as it was Lenin and Trotsky who engineered the blood-bath at Kronstadt, and they were hardly likely to condemn their own actions.

As for their dogmatism, for longer than I can remember they have been predicting the fall of capitalism within a short period (around 5 years). Unfortunately it hasn't happened yet. But there is no re-thinking in their ranks, the failure of the prediction is actually looked upon as proof of dialectics! No, we don't know how they came to that conclusion.

But what kind of society do they want? When pressed on the subject they will admit that their concept of workers control is one of widespread nationalisation. The only workers voice will be on regional committees which will be composed of 1/3 from the state, 1/3 Trade Union officials and 1/3 from the workers. This effectively means that, on their own committees, the workers will be outnumbered by a factor of 2 to 1.

Shout it loud- gay and PROUD



THE PAISLEY 'SUS'

Under the last Labour government a draft was made of an act which would bring the law on homosexuality in Northern Ireland into line with that of England and Wales. But when Labour saw its fragile hold on power threatened it dropped the draft, so as to get the support of the Ulster MP's. One of them, Ian Paisley, was busy at the time with his 'Save Ulster from Sodomy' campaign.

The Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association (NIGRA) then took their case to the European Commission for Human Rights, who are expected to announce their decision by June of this year. It is understood that the British government has already been given three months private notice of the commission's findings, and it is very likely that it has ordered them to legalise sex between men over twenty one years.

Gay oppression and liberation will be discussed in future issues of 'ANARCHIST WORKER'.

The Myth Exploder writes....

ANARCHISTS DON'T WORK! Another of the misconceptions people have about anarchists. Thy myth is of anarchists 'doing their own thing', freaks who make bombs and love, sit around in the sun all day and live off other people. Certainly such people do exist. We don't condemn them but anarchists they are not. They cannot be considered to be a positive force in society even though they can be considered to have a more positive attitude than a lot of people.

However in an anarchist society everybody who is capable would be expected to contribute to their community. To say that anarchists don't work shows a complete ignorance of the history of the anarchists. It is a working class philosophy, in fact those who oppose the anarchists are the people who live off others - bosses, politicians and priests, the real parasites of society.

The Anarchist Workers Alliance is a workers organisation, unlike the bosses we do not believe in living off other people.

**BREAK
THE
NUCLEAR
CHAIN
NO
URANIUM
MINING**

CANCER MINE

'Radium Hill' mine in the 1950's a total sufficient in uranium. Prospecting is going on in Donegal, Carlow, Kilkenny, Tyrone and at the Allihies in West Cork

Over 600 people marched through the town of Lettermacaward in Co Donegal on March 30th to oppose any uranium prospecting or mining in the area.

Uranium is both the fuel for nuclear power stations and the raw material for nuclear weapons. The radioactive emissions from it are dangerous. In any large or repeated doses it causes skin, lung and other cancers. It also causes Anaemia, Sterility, Blindness, Leukaemia and finally death.

At the mining stage a radioactive gas called Radon is released which causes lung cancer. Radon induced cancer takes 15 to 20 years to show up, which means that the mining companies can disclaim any responsibility for workers who will die later.

The US department of Public Health has estimated that up to 1,000 miners will die from radiation exposure on the job. A South Australian Health Ministry report shows that of the miners who worked underground at the

waste from the mines is also very dangerous. For thousands of years it remains radioactive and seeps through the ground polluting rivers, lakes, fish, livestock and water supplies. At Rum Jungle in Australia hundred of square miles have been rendered uninhabitable for hundreds of years. Piles of mining wastes were washed away from the dump during heavy rains over 20 years ago. On June 16th of last year the same happened in New Mexico (USA). And livestock are dying already.

There is little uranium in Europe in commercially viable quantities. There is some in France and in Scandinavia. In the Orkneys there are large deposits but the local people have been totally successfully in keeping the mining companies out.

There are several firms prospecting in Ireland and all of them are getting very generous EEC grants to do so. The EEC is more than eager to become self-

The companies involved are Irish Base Metals, Munster Base Metals and Tara, all with an address at 162 Clontarf Rd., Dublin 3. Maugh Ltd has its offices at 78 Merrion Square and 'Yellow Lion', Burren St., Carlow.

For more information get a copy of: 'Uranium mining in Donegal' from the AWA or from Just Books, 7 Winetavern St., Belfast 1. It only costs 20p.

TRADE UNION ANTI-NUKES

At a meeting attended by over 150 trade unionists in Liberty Hall on March 22nd a Trade Union Anti-Nuclear Campaign was formed. Everybody recognised the need to bring the issue into the unions. Any member individual member of a union can join the TUANC and it will also seek the affiliation of union branches and trades councils. You can join or get more information by writing to: Mick Enright, Killinick, Co Wexford.



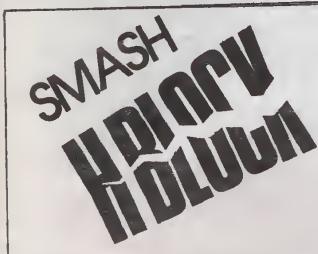
ARMAGH ELEVEN

On April 9th the 'Armagh 11' were found guilty and fined a total of £280. The charges go back to March of last year when a peaceful International Womens Day picket of Armagh prison was attacked by the RUC and the eleven women were arrested.

The relatively mild sentences say nothing about legal 'justice' but rather reflect the work of the various local Armagh defence committees. They managed to get a good deal of publicity about the RUC attack and also about the conditions inside the prison. Obviously the court didn't want to add to all the publicity by handing down jail terms. All of the women have said that they will not pay the fines, so it remains to be seen if the court will back down again or if it will just wait until things cool down and then jail them for non-payment.

None of the women were in court when the case was heard, instead they took part in a tribunal into conditions in the prison. Since the beginning of the year things have been getting worse for the women prisoners who are on protest (for the restoration of political status). They are denied washing and toilet facilities. Women who are sick or pregnant receive no proper medical attention. Physical attacks by both male and female screws are routine and all of them are locked up in their cells for 23 hours of every day.

A report containing most of the evidence presented at the tribunal is available from Women Against Imperialism, 7 Riverdale Park Drive, Andersonstown, Belfast 11. It costs 50p.



- 1) NO PRISON UNIFORM
- 2) NO PRISON WORK
- 3) FREE ASSOCIATION
- 4) VISITS, LETTERS, PARCELS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
- 5) FULL REMISSION

IT'S A POLITICAL FIGHT

This means that the campaign to restore status must essentially be a political one. As always little will be gained by pleading, being nice or going off to see churchmen or politicians. The state will never give in just because somebody (no matter how 'important' they are) asks them to do so. They will have to be forced

The campaign should also take up the issue of the repression and torture which led to the prisoners being in jail.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

The marches and pickets should be supported as they generate publicity and also provide us with an opportunity to come out onto the streets and say what we think. But it is also vitally important that the campaign is brought into the organised working class, into the tenants associations

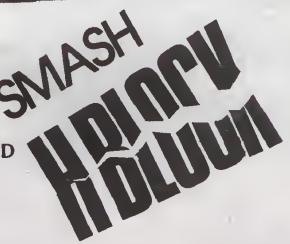
SANTRY

Trinity College (Dublin) intend to build a storage and incineration plant for solid low level radioactive waste in Santry. They have already got planning permission so the question must be asked: how safe is low level radiation?

The nuclear establishment have always argued that there is a safe level of exposure below which no damage is done. This 'safe' level has already been reduced to one tenth of its 1952 value. This has happened as the so called experts found that each of their predictions of what was 'safe' proved to be wrong. Most of the recent studies show that there is NO safe level. In any quantity radiation is dangerous.

Every time radiation is released into the environment the danger to public health is increased. The ultimate cost is paid in terms of leukaemia, cancer and birth defects in babies born to people who have been exposed.

Is this what Trinity College expect us to put up with. If it is so safe why not burn it in Trinity itself, WHY?



Political status did exist up to 1976 and we believe that it is quite valid for these prisoners to want to hold on to it - why should they be expected to put up with a loss of their hard won status.

CASTLEREAGH

Of course it was more than mere vindictiveness that led the state to end status. It is an integral part of their (failing) 'normalisation' policy, their attempt to make out that the 'irish problem' is nothing more than a question of law and order. They want us to forget about the torture in Castlereagh, the non-jury Diplock courts, the fact that 80% of all convictions are based solely on fabricated 'confessions'. The British state want to cover up the especially vicious treatment given to these prisoners. And they want to deny the political motivation of their struggle.

and the trade unions. Especially the latter as they can exercise a very real power over any government. That is not to say that it will be easy but a start must be made.

The last couple of months have seen an attempt to raise the issue inside the unions. There is still an attitude that the unions should not 'get involved in politics' but it is getting better.

In Cork, Dublin and Waterford the trades councils have passed motions supporting the prisoners. Motions get the discussion going but they must be followed by action, as in Waterford where the trades council sponsored a public meeting and wrote to all their affiliated union branches. Groups of trade unionists who will fight on the H Block issue have been formed in Belfast, Derry and Dublin. It is early days to be talking about widespread industrial action on the issue but that is what we have to start working for.

Anarchist Worker

H-BLOCK

There are now 374 'blanket men' in the H Blocks of Long Kesh and 33 women on protest in Armagh prison. It all began in March 1976 when the British government ended political status. The republican prisoners said that they would not accept this and that they would refuse to wear the prison uniform or do prison work.

BEATINGS

The authorities responded by depriving them of one days remission for every day spent 'on the blanket'. They also decided that the prisoners could have no exercise, no TV or radio, no books or newspapers, no hobbies or handicrafts, no proper medical attention, no association with other prisoners, no pens or

paper and no food parcels. On top of all this the screws regularly take out prisoners for brutal beatings.

'DIRTY PROTEST'

In March 1978 the screws in Long Kesh took a decision not to allow the men out of their cells to go to the toilet unless they asked for their permission, called them 'Sir' and wore the prison uniform there and back. A compromise offer to bring around a bucket so that the men could empty their chamber pots was rejected by the authorities. As a protest the men smeared their shit on the cell walls and so began the 'dirty protest'.

In Armagh prison the women have

been subjected to the full H Block treatment since the begining of this year.

WHY WE SUPPORT THE PRISONERS

More than a few people are arguing that the republican prisoners should have status because they are not 'criminals'. We see this as elitist and divisive. Leaving aside the small minority of criminals inside for murder, rape and other violent crime you are left with the rest who did nothing particularly anti-social. Shoplifters, prostitutes, small-time thieves, beggars and the like. We support all prisoners and we are working to bring about the type of society that will have no need for prisons.

